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1794

A

LETTER

TO

EARL STANHOPE,

FROM

MR. MILES.

WITH NOTES.

“Of all employments of the mind, surely that is the worthiest, and as it
“were divine, which tends to establish order in society; to humanize
“the great leviathan; to adapt the various parts of the vast machine of
“social government, and nicely fit each spring where it can best act,
“each wheel where it can best move, to the purposes of the general com-
“bination; to duly weigh and obviate the friction that might impede
“or swerve to the detriment of the diverse parts, until the whole pro-
“ceed in just and invariable concert.” History of Athens, by Sir
William Young, chap. v. page 29.

LONDON:

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CORNHILL.

1794.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE number of faithless and ill-written narratives which have been given to the world as histories drawn from authentic documents, have long induced the Writer of the following Letter to wish that the scandalous combination between Booksellers rapacious of gain and Scribblers without talents or principle could be exposed.

The licence which has been taken with the public credulity since the Revolution in France excited the curiosity and created an interest in the minds of men, is as unexampled as it is indecent; it calls loudly for reprehension, and ought to be discouraged and if possible suppressed, from motives of regard to justice

and posterity. The extreme avidity of all ranks and descriptions of people to obtain information from any quarter, and almost on any terms, was a temptation which even avarice with all its caution and circumspection could not withstand. Hence the torrent of miserable compilations from newspapers, and authorities still less respectable, with which the country has been deluged, and which have been sold at a rate so exorbitant, that the easy unsuspecting generosity of the Public appears to have kept pace with the rapacity of those who have most shamefully abused it, and who seem to think that every mode of acquiring money is honest that is not penal. That character should be of little import in their estimation may not be very extraordinary; but it is extremely so that the patience of the Public should have so long submitted to these speculations in

memoirs, histories, and correspondence, and to those exactions which have turned out as profitable to the men who levied them, as they are indecent and disreputable.—If nothing however resulted from the folly of one party and the knavery of the other, than that of administering to the wants of needy, or to the cupidity of mercenary men; this traffic, mean and contemptible as it is, would neither provoke notice nor deserve rebuke. But the evil is of wide and mischievous extent, for the public mind has been vitiated and abused by falsehoods as disgraceful to literature as they are offensive to common sense; and it is this consideration which has decided the Author of the following pages to publish, whenever his leisure will allow him, a variety of letters and papers relative to the different revolutions which

have

have shaken with more or less violence every government in Europe, and which must have a very considerable influence on the morals and manners of the rising generation.

A residence for many years on the Continent, and his having been a spectator of the revolutions in France, Brabant and Liege enable him to speak with certainty and precision to a variety of facts imperfectly known in this country; and considering his acquirements rather as a trust reposed in him than as the means of aggrandisement, he will not impose fictions for truths, or trifle either with the impatience or credulity of the Public.—His object is to inform—not mislead—for every species of deception is unfair, and should be reprobated. He means to instruct—not insult—and as he is no less an enemy to despotism and every abuse

abuse of power, than he is to anarchy, he will deliver his sentiments with that freedom and independence which characterise a mind ardent in its pursuits, and passionately attached to Liberty and Truth.



A
LETTER

TO
EARL STANHOPE.

London, April 12, 1794.

MY LORD,

IF I have dispensed with forms, I can plead the example of your Lordship; but the authority of precedents is subordinate to that of reason, and the occasion not only justifies the irregularity of a public address from a man who has not the honour of your acquaintance, but supercedes the necessity of an excuse.

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On topics of great public concern, in which the political rights of nations are no less involved than the civil rights of individuals, there is no impropriety in one member of society communicating his sentiments to another; and where the laws cannot reach a departure from the great line of duty which the Constitution has prescribed to men in high public stations, the supplemental aid of the press may be called for without any violation of that decorum and respect which is due to ministerial or hereditary rank.

I do not mean to dispute but to remonstrate with your Lordship. The cause of truth is seldom benefited by controversy, nor is it always that error is corrected by invectives or personalities.

Occasions may indeed occur in which it is impossible to avoid them; but they are in general the common resources of
captious,

captious, little minds, and rather prove a vindictive and litigious disposition, than a wish to enforce conviction, or obtain reformation.

I disclaim such motives ; they are unworthy of the cause I am called upon to defend, and as incompatible with liberal discussion as they are foreign to my temper and general habits. It is not contest that I would provoke, but truth that I would demonstrate. It is not my intention to expose the infirmities incident to our common nature, but to display in all their natural deformity the flagrant and audacious excesses of that political turpitude which has of late mocked reproof, and insolently braved the anger and resentment of the nation.

Unaccustomed to flatter, and naturally averse to dissimulation, your Lordship must excuse me if I speak in strong language — in a language suitable to the

dignity of the subject, and to that rank which I hold in the scale of created beings ; nor can I, in discussing the important questions under consideration, fail in the respect which is due to your character, without forgetting what I owe to my own.

In considering your Lordship as one of the hereditary guardians to whom the property, personal liberty, and the whole civil inheritance of your fellow-citizens are confided, I have a right to investigate any part of your conduct that is likely to bring the sacred deposits into hazard, which the laws have entrusted to your discretion and integrity. It is on public, not on private ground, my Lord, that I mean to arraign your proceedings ; and if, from the appearance of your name in the title-page, Malevolence should indulge the mean hope of perusing a detail of private history, in which
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the world can have little interest or concern, they will be miserably disappointed when they discover that the following pages are confined entirely to the transactions of the times, to great public events, and to that line of conduct which personal interest as well as public duty prescribe to your Lordship in a language at once eloquent and sublime, and infinitely more imperious than it becomes me to adopt. It is in short an appeal from the passions to your reason; and in addressing myself to your judgment, I feel assured that you will on reflection become sensible of the mischiefs that may eventually result to your rank, character, and fortune, if the principles you admire, and the doctrines you recommend, should ever be in a condition to dispute the sovereignty of the laws, or contest an establishment in the minds of men with the milder and more equitable

maxims in which we have been educated. It is those maxims, so wise in their origin and so beneficial in their effects, which it behoves us to maintain. We are not called upon to support the miserable views of party, but to resist the progress of opinions destructive of all order; it is no longer a question whether the house of Devon, or Portland, or of Lansdown shall fetter and enslave both king and people, and govern the country, but whether government itself shall exist?

Interests of far greater magnitude than those which have hitherto divided, perplexed, and oppressed us, are at issue. More important objects have superseded such considerations—objects, my Lord, which call on our vigour to support, and on our affections to adopt and cherish! It is no longer demanded, which of the factions shall hold the sovereign and the nation in disgraceful bondage, but whether
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ther the sovereign and the nation shall exist? The despicable reign of cabal, thank Heaven, is no more; and the people, relieved from the mischiefs arising from low political intrigue, behold in triumph the stupendous Colossus, under which even Majesty itself has been compelled to march with curbed neck, hurled from its proud summit and destroyed! It lies prostrate, my Lord; and would you collect the broken and dispersed fragments? Would you, from its scattered parts form another whole, and, appropriating its powers to yourself, *compass* us and *lord* it over us, with giant stride, the Brissot, the Danton, or Robespierre of the hour? My Lord, there is danger in the attempt; but if your courage is equal to the enterprise, your honour forbids it, for the infamy is greater than the risk. My Lord, the times demand a firm and decided conduct; and I tell

your Lordship, however Utopian the hope and Herculean the labour may appear, that the moment is rapidly advancing when Faction, that cut-purse of the empire, must and shall be **CRUSHED!**

I am weary of recurring perpetually to the French Revolution—not that the subject is of a nature to be exhausted, or that it can ever cease to be interesting ; but my sensibility is not equal to the task of contemplating with indifference the scenes I have beheld. The intimacy in which I have lived with some of the principal actors in that great event, the most of whom have been butchered or banished ; the recollection that I have of Paris in its splendour, and of Paris in ruins and in blood, impress my afflicted mind with such a train of awful, melancholy, and painful reflections, as to substract very considerably from the enjoyments

joyments of life, and to force me at times to regard the species to which I belong with horror!

Yet while there are men weak or corrupt enough to hold forth the conduct of France as a model of superlative excellence, and worthy of imitation—while there are men so little accustomed to reflection, and of minds so perverse as to reject experience, and prefer conjecture to evidence; their guilt, folly, or obstinacy must be opposed by a force equal to that which they urge in support of opinions which should never have been revealed, and which ought to have been withheld, from motives infinitely superior to those which policy or personal convenience may dictate.

If the wise answer of Solon to the question which required a provision against injustice had occurred to your Lordship,

Lordship, you would certainly have been less disposed to recommend the proceedings of men to our notice and admiration who seem resolved to do no right and take no wrong.

The only way to guard effectually against injury is “*by teaching ALL to feel the injuries done to EACH** ;” and with this maxim in view it is possible that your Lordship would have a much better comprehension of your obligations to society, and much better understand the duties of a legislator, than by looking for a knowledge of either in the decrees of the Convention, or the sanguinary harangues of usurpers and impostors.

The conduct of France is recommended to us for imitation—But what have the French done, my Lord, but change from

* History of Athens by Sir William Young, chap. v. page 31.

bad to worse? Yet, deplorable as their condition is, that of ours would exceed it, if we should renounce the certainty we possess, to run after Utopian schemes of equality, as useless in speculation as they have been found dangerous in practice.

It cannot have escaped your Lordship's observation, that the distance from good to bad is much greater, and the consequences much more serious, than from bad to worse. Some degree of violence is necessary to produce the one; but the mind anticipates the other, and is prepared for the event.

The most moderate as well as the most honest men in France had long felt and acknowledged the necessity of a reform. The abuses in the public administration had accumulated to an extent which clogged the whole machine of government; and on a nearer inspection of
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the evils that oppressed and retarded its progress, it was discovered that any thing short of a revolution would not correct the mischiefs, or give security to the nation for an equitable and provident government in future. The instant the salutary measure was proposed, a general ferment ensued; the entire nation set up for reformers, and every one thought himself qualified for the arduous and complicated task. Unhappily for the public interest and repose, there were men who meant to go *further*; and though they were clamorous only for *reform*, they had resolved on the destruction of monarchy. We have also men of that description amongst us; artful and designing men, my Lord, who bellow for *reform*, but mean REVOLT, and who would go any lengths rather than relinquish their purpose. The object of the new clubs and associations which they introduced and
endeavoured

endeavoured to establish in this country, was certainly meant to excite a ferment in the minds of the people: their object was to overawe Parliament and the Nation, and the tumult once begun, who can say where it would end, whose property would be secure, or whose life respected?

These are very serious questions, my Lord; questions, which it behoves every man to consider, who has property to lose or families to provide for, especially when they recollect that these commotions are exciting in the country by men who have nothing to lose, and who are anxious to see the whole empire blaze in one grand and comprehensive ruin.

Do these men, my Lord, who look up to you as their chief, wish for a total change in the government? If they do, what will that avail them? All well regulated governments, and I am sure

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we will submit to no other, forbid riot and revolt. Do they wish for the destruction of monarchy? That is impossible, for the *thing* will exist though the *name* should be proscribed; and we know from experience that Protectors, Presidents, and Dictators have been more despotic than Kings. Besides, monarchy is our choice, not merely from habit or prejudice, but from a full conviction that it is a necessary ingredient in the Constitution. It is a *niche* that we have filled to prevent its being occupied by any one else, and our attachment to the throne is more the result of reason than of education. Is it the Peerage that distresses the dissatisfied gentlemen, who appear to us under such a variety of names that it would puzzle a host of special pleaders to describe them in a declaration? And is it in compliance with the clamours of such men that the House of Lords is to
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be voted useless? Is it in this country that turbulent and discontented men would render titles as obnoxious and contemptible as they are on the continent, where vanity may purchase a marquissate or a barony in an acre of furze, and sport the former after the other is burnt?

Is it because the National Convention in France had the servility to sacrifice its honours to a mob, that distinctions should be confounded and abolished in this country, where we know that they are conferred on men whose virtues or whose talents have benefited the State—whose great and splendid services have entitled them to honourable distinction, and which, like an entailed estate, descends only to their eldest sons? Where is the man who will presume to say that the titles conferred on the illustrious names of Pitt, Thurlow, and Pratt—or on those of

Elliot

Elliot and Cornwallis—of Hawke and of Rodney—have been ill bestowed?—What man, my Lord, but knows that the title of Mahon was conferred on the great grandfather of your Lordship, as a reward for his having added the island of Minorca to the British dominions; and that he was afterwards advanced in the peerage, as a reward for his services in the cabinet? Is it not strange, my Lord, that you should be the only man that seems to have forgotten these circumstances, so flattering to yourself and your family? Is it not strange, that you should wish to dry up the source from whence you derive both fame and fortune? Titles are said to be conferred by the Sovereign; but it is, in fact, the Nation that confers them. Some person must be selected, in all states, to express the general will of the whole, and manage its interests—That person
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in this country is the KING! and in whose hands can the grand deposit of national honours and rewards be so properly placed? It may therefore be said in full confidence to those who would abolish titles, and degrade great and good men, that while we esteem and reverence the peers in their legislative and judicial capacities, we love them as gentlemen living amongst us, mixing cordially with us, and partaking of our diversions. Look at them in the country, furrounded by an happy tenantry, diffusing mirth and plenty round their hospitable mansions, giving employment to the industrious poor, and animating, by their presence, the whole neighbourhood! Drive them from their seats; proscribe their persons and their very names; seize upon their property, my Lord, as the French have done, and what a ruthless scene of devastation will appear! God for-

give the man whose cold and phlegmatic temper will permit him even to contemplate so general a ruin without horror, much less to execute it! If the Peers, as legislators or as judges, abused the confidence reposed in them—if, as men of splendid fortunes they insulted those who were dependent on them—if, as landlords they extorted from the poor peasant more than the produce of the soil he cultivates—or if, as citizens forming equally with ourselves a part of this great nation their conduct was mean or immoral—some excuse might be offered for the clamour which these new legislators would excite, if possible, against them. But the contrary of all these is the fact: their decisions in parliament have always been directed by wisdom and equity; their general manners, in the more social walks of private life, prove that something of more intrinsic value than

wealth is annexed to high birth. The low rents at which in general their farms are let, some of which have been in the families of the present occupiers for centuries, endear them as landlords to their tenants; and as to their moral characters, in what body of men is there in this or in any other country, more private worth, more rectitude, or more good sense? Why then are they to be deprived of the rank to which they or their ancestors have been raised by their merit? What benefit can possibly result to the nation from an act of so much injustice; from an act that would destroy that spirit of emulation, which we all know and feel to be the source at once of every public and private virtue? As well may we drive those great and respectable lawyers from the seats of justice, which they hold for our protection, security, and advantage; as well may we degrade the

gallant admirals from the commands they have obtained for our advantage by long services, as to deprive them of the peerages conferred on them as rewards for the victories they have obtained over the enemies of their country.

Happily this question applies to every man in these kingdoms, where the road to places of trust and emolument, to wealth and distinctions, lies open to the meanest individual, and creates, as it were, a kind of emulation in the latter to acquire the former by honourable exertions or laudable industry, an ambition between affluence and indigence. Let these excitements to glory be annihilated, my Lord, and this country will soon dwindle into that wretched impotence and insignificancy, which mark, more or less, every nation in the world, except the one to which you belong. What an excitement to talents and integrity in the law,—to
valour

valour at sea or in the field—to piety and virtue in the church!—These three great avenues to the British Peerage are open to *every* British subject; and not a man amongst us but may see his sons or relatives advanced to hereditary honours, and his family ennobled; not owing to court favour, or to pecuniary means, but to the strong and triumphant claims of superlative merit, which, in this country, thank Heaven! can never be rejected. But if hereditary rank is offensive to the self-created friends of the people, what have the bishops done to provoke their resentment? Their fees, with very few exceptions, are not more than sufficient for their decent support, and a very moderate provision for their families.

No retrenchments that even parsimony itself could make, would be an object to the nation. Besides, the nation is pledged to support them; they are of our own

instituition, and are become a part of the constitution. Their revenues are so many entails which descend to their successors, not to be touched but with great delicacy, and not to be alienated but by violent injustice. What an insult to the good sense and integrity of the country, to suppose it will give the lie to its own maxims and regulations, and barter its honour for gain! Besides, it should be recollected (and that with some degree of national pride) that a more learned body of men does not exist; that their lives are exemplary in the extreme; that most of them have been selected for their merit, from the humbler walks in life; and that their establishment is so intimately blended with the whole hierarchy of the church, that it cannot be separated from it without equal danger to religion and the state.

Their dissolution would only be a prelude to the destruction of the inferior clergy;

clergy ; for it is the CHURCH, my Lord, and not the BISHOPS, against which all this artillery is levelled ; and if the ruin of the one could be accomplished, that of the other would follow of course. It has been demonstrated, that the entire produce of all the church lands and colleges in the three kingdoms, would not divide amongst the parochial clergy above one hundred pounds a-year ; and as so small a compensation could not, consistently with the justice and dignity of the nation, be offered in lieu of tithes, we should lose by their suppression, especially when it is recollected that a full fifth of them is in the hands of the laity, the private property of all ranks of people, and wholly unconnected with the clergy. But the objection that has been made to them, does not in fact proceed from a wish to ease the industrious farmer of what seditious and interested men would per-

suade him is a burthen ; but from a
 rancorous and criminal hatred to all ec-
 clestiaftical establishments whatever. The
 Dissenters are a numerous, a learned, and
 certainly a very respectable body of men ;
 but they do not perceive that they are in
 danger of being made the tools and in-
 struments of faction. The abolition of
 episcopacy would be followed by the sub-
 version of presbytery in Scotland, and of
 toleration in England. It is not the
 mitre and crozier that these *modern* re-
 formers would demolish. It is faith and
 good morals that they wish to extirpate.
 Their aim is the general ruin and extinc-
 tion of all religion ; and the Dissenters,
 for aiding them in this diabolical enter-
 prise, will only have the miserable conso-
 lation of being the last sacrificed. It is
 one of the maxims of bad men, my Lord,
 and from which they never even acci-
 dentally depart, to reduce the good to a
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level with themselves ; and this will account for the indefatigable zeal with which committees were established in France, and a correspondence proposed by them, with the firebrands of all nations and complexions, for the diabolical purpose of destroying all those who had property or character to lose, or who refused to recommend a general insurrection and massacre throughout the world. The unlettered African claims an equal share with the well-informed European in this infernal business ; and in their nocturnal assemblies they seem to emulate each other in their indefatigable zeal for the extinction of all the virtues of the heart and mind. This is no random censure on an entire people, but a well-authenticated fact, to the truth of which many of your countrymen can bear ample testimony.

My Lord, it is generosity—it is humanity,

manity, it is duty in your Lordship to undeceive those well-meaning people who have been drawn into a wrong sense of things by a set of enterprising and of course dangerous men, who appear to have abandoned the sober callings by which they earned an honest livelihood, for the purpose, as they pretend, of correcting abuses, instructing mankind, and establishing what they call equal rights. That they have been so far deluded as to quit their former occupations, and so conceited as to run from county to county, and from village to village, preaching sedition and revolt, must have been matter of deep and melancholy concern to their friends as well as of alarm to the magistrate. I am very far from recommending harsh measures, and equally so from believing them to be salutary. It is always well to commence by admonition, though it should be necessary
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perhaps to finish by chastisement. It would be exacting too much, and being righteous over much, to expect that men should be angels: but though it would be absurd to require perfection, every man, on examining his own breast, may find that they can be better than they are. I am not of that fullen and morose temper that would treat folly like vice, and whip it into sobriety and wisdom; yet, when any particular folly is artfully propagated, and rendered as it were epidemical; when, from being confined to a few obscure individuals, scarce known or respected, it is likely to infect the general mass, and become universal; when it threatens such serious mischief and calamity to the community; it changes its very name and nature, and ought to be opposed by all the force of reason, and, if that should fail, by all the force of coercion.

To suffer it to grow into giant size
without

without taking any steps to crush and extinguish it in the bud, would be conniving at the infamy, and rendering ourselves accessaries to the guilt that destroys us. The phrensy of an individual is of little import—it can do little harm; its duration is necessarily short, and its mischief of small extent; but that of a mob bids defiance to all estimate, and propagates itself by the terror it inspires.

As these itinerant legislators, with more rags to their backs than ideas in their heads, have announced their plans of operation in direct terms, it will not be amiss to examine how far they are founded in wisdom, and likely to produce any good purpose; after which, it may be useful to inquire how far such proceedings are justified by necessity, or warranted by the example of former times; and finally, if they are compatible with the general peace and felicity of civilized society.

society. In doing this, I wish that full credit could be given for purity of intention in those who hold these new-fangled doctrines in porter-houses, ale-houses, cow-houses, watch-houses, and meeting-houses; for we have patriots of all sizes, from dwarfs to giants; of all complexions from pale white, to jaundice and jet black; and of all descriptions from beggars who would be lords, to lords who are in a fair way of becoming beggars. Nay, we have them of all disorders, and with minds as distempered as their carcasses.

Even the lame, the blind, and the paralytic are admitted into this chaos of reformers; and considering the well-proportioned quantities of vice, poverty, and disease among them, it would puzzle justice and humanity to decide whether this piebald assemblage of legislators should be sent to an infirmary, or to an
house

house of correction. Wild and wicked, however, as their schemes are considered by all sober and rational people, I would nevertheless suppose them totally innocent of every design to subvert the Constitution in Church and State, if they had not given unquestionable proofs to the contrary ; and considering these brawlers not only as adventurers and incendiaries, but as enthusiasts and visionaries, I will endeavour to convert them from error, by proving the absurdity of *their* fears, and the injustice of their complaints.

We have heard all the existing regulations in society declared to be neither more nor less than a farrago of abuses, and that our ancestors were *knaves* for *devising* them, and ourselves *blockheads* for *submitting* to them. This is not the proper place to dispute to whom these epithets belong ; whether to those who made and those who submit to those regulations,

gulations, or to those who would revile and destroy them ; but it is the proper place to state to you, my Lord, what these *well-informed* and *well-meaning* politicians call *abuses*, because it will lead you to discover, by implication, what they mean by PERFECTIONS. Among what these levellers call a blemish in our Constitution, and which they hold forth as incurably obnoxious, if not removed, is that of the executive power being placed in the hands of the Sovereign—not that they complain of the power having been abused or perverted—not that they have any thing to alledge either against the moral or political character of his Majesty, for in these instances he is held to be exemplary, but that they detest Kings and Monarchy, and would vote the destruction of the former, and the universal dissolution of the latter, with as little remorse as the sanguinary assassins at
Paris

Paris murdered their sovereign. The executive power, they pretend, should be in the *multitude*, as it is in France, where every tree is a gibbet, and every other man you meet a hangman. I do not think that *such* a system of government suits your disposition, and much less your convenience, or that it will ever be thought so eligible as the one that we already possess. Nor do I think that posterity at any period, however remote from the present time, will be disposed to discard royalty, and turn the nobility and gentry out of doors.

That such is the aim of our night-cellar statesmen, and such the tendency of all the writings and harangues since the year 1789, cannot well be doubted; and if the portion of courage and good sense which abound in this country, did not form a barrier to this torrent of folly and iniquity, our situation would soon be

as deplorable as that of our neighbours on the Continent. If mismanagement, breach of trust, or any other crime, had been alleged against the King, Lords, and Commons, some reason indeed would exist for *examining* into their conduct, but *none* for *abolishing* them: and what other object this latter measure can have in the minds of those who propose it but a general pillage, preceded or followed perhaps by a general massacre, I cannot well conceive. This however is certain, that should the clamour be adopted, we would merit the reproach so often made us by foreigners, and prove ourselves to be as variable and as mutable as the air we breathe: for what else would it be, if, after all the hazards we have encountered, all the blood we have spilt, and all the treasure we have exhausted, we should resolve to level the glorious edifice to the ground, which has

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been

been constructed and erected with so much difficulty, and under whose splendid and capacious dome we enjoy so much solid comfort and security? I do not know what others may think of this levity, should it ever happen; but this I know, my Lord, that were we to give into this phrensy, we should fall into a worse and more perilous state of slavery than that from which our ancestors so bravely emancipated themselves in the last century, and we would become oppressors, murderers, regicides, and subverters of that which we have hitherto acknowledged to be *lawful* government, and to obtain which, an uninterrupted struggle for centuries has been carried on against despotism.

I wish all good and conscientious men to reflect seriously on the blessings they enjoy at present, in this mild and happy country, and to impress on their uncor-

rupted minds this wholesome and indisputable truth, *that as every purpose for which men enter into society is answered under a Constitution where the LIFE and PROPERTY of the peasant are as secure, and held as sacred as those of a Prince ; every idea of absolute perfection in Government is chimerical, and every assurance of its practicability not only impudent and fraudulent in the extreme, but dangerous to listen to.*

I do not address myself on this occasion solely to your Lordship, or to those who steer their consciences by the occasion, and cannot lose the honour they never had ; but to the honest and industrious farmer and manufacturer, who denying vice and virtue to be mere relative terms, allow them to have an existence in nature, and believe the practice of the latter to be as essential to their well-being hereafter, as that of the former

mer is known to be ruinous to their happiness and characters in this life.

Let those who pretend to have discovered so much imperfection and injustice in our laws, point out where they bear hard on the guiltless and undeserving; or where they are insufficient, except in not being able to bring those to the whipping-post who libel their excellence, or preach their destruction.

To countenance the clamours of such men would be contending for shame as well as servitude, and reducing ourselves to the worst kind of slavery.

It would be carrying our ears to be bored by men without names, and inverting the very order of servitude, by subjecting ourselves to the tyranny of our servants. Whatever may be the sentiments of those into whose hands this Letter may chance to tumble, I am sure
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it will be favourably read by some, and patiently perused by all; for those that are against innovation and licentiousness, will certainly be glad to find others of the same opinion as themselves; and those who are for riot and anarchy, have given evidence enough that there is nothing in nature which they cannot endure. Let the former of these be confirmed and fortified, by this Address to your Lordship, in their love of order; and let the latter take shame to themselves, if they can, for wishing to disturb it. I am convinced that we shall never be so far humbled in spirit, or degraded in morals, to receive the ignominy and affront that bad men would offer us. Having nothing to say against the particular conduct of any of the three branches of the Legislature, they object to them in the gross, and are for annihilating all of them at one stroke.

But what do they offer to give us in exchange for the *King* whom they would banish, for the *House of Lords* whom they would abolish, and for the *Commons* whom they would dismiss with as little ceremony and good manners as they would their Sovereign?

Aristocracy more than monarchy is their aversion, and I do not well see how they can approve of a Republic, since it is *legislation* that they dislike and fear. It is not *freedom* but FREE QUARTER and FREE BOOTY that they seek, and when you consider the *no worth*, the *no quality*, and *no consciences* of these modern reformers, we are puzzled which to condemn; the arrogance of their pretensions, or the extent of our forbearance. How far such men are qualified to judge of abuses! in *any* state may well be questioned; but no doubt can remain as to the right they would

would assume to dictate to their superiors, and supersede the whole legislative authority of the country.

If this should ever unfortunately happen; if men, the most part of whom are beggars and malefactors, and only known by the villanies and mischiefs they have committed, should carry their infernal projects into successful execution, our ancestors will have vindicated the liberties of England in vain, and have opposed arbitrary power to little purpose, since in that case we should fall under the vilest of all despotism, and be governed by a rod of iron, without any other law or rule but that which the caprice of a ferocious and fluctuating mob, with as many minds as there may be individuals in it, shall dictate. All kind of slavery, my Lord, is misery; but that which is imposed by those who are themselves objects of contempt and scorn, and which is ac-

accompanied by contempt and scorn, must
 surely stir every honest man's indignation,
 and is endured by none whom Nature
 did not intend as slaves. It is not meant
 to revile any man for his property, or for
 the meanness of his birth; no blame can
 in justice be laid on men for the faults of
 fortune, any otherwise than they make
 them their own; and if the poverty of
 these cellar statesmen is objected to them,
 it is because it is accompanied with fraud
 and violence; and if I remind your
 Lordship of the quality of those whom
 you would *lead* to-day and may be com-
 pelled to *follow* to-morrow, it is because
 they seem to have forgotten it.

In short, they labour to undo in an in-
 stant what our ancestors have been work-
 ing for ages to acquire. They object to
 the *King*, because it is his duty to preserve
 the public tranquillity, and enforce obe-
 dience to the laws—they object to the
Nobility,

Nobility, because distinction always implies superiority of virtue and of talent, as well as of fortune, and it is natural that bad men should abominate whatever brings to their recollection a sense of their own unworthiness—they object to *laws*, because the penalty of violating them is a restraint on their necessities and propensities, and reduces them to the painful obligation of earning their daily bread by honest industry, when they could support themselves with much less trouble; and in a much better style, by *thieving* or *begging* if the *laws* were destroyed: hence their quarrel to the *King*, and to the *House of Peers*; they wish to annihilate the authority of the *one*, in the hope of becoming stewards in *trust*, and finally proprietors *in fee*, of the estates of the *other*; for which purpose they hired a man to cry down majesty and nobility among us, as burthenfome and disgraceful—

ful—But which, let me ask, in the name of common sense and of common honesty (if *such* authorities may be appealed to without offence to your Lordship) is the more so, a filthy set of raggamuffins, riding lords paramount over the whole nation, levying contributions at will, inflicting death at random and at pleasure on those whom they meet or dislike, or an ancient and dignified establishment, which, collecting as it were into one common focus all the scattered rays of national grandeur, diffuses light, splendour, and power, throughout the whole empire? I will not insult your good sense, my Lord, by pressing for an answer to this question, but merely remind you, that these halfpenny club politicians seem to have forgotten, that it has been hitherto usual in those who hold great employments, to possess some portion of integrity as well as some degree of talent.

To

To judge according to the dictates of reason, one would certainly imagine some small faculties and endowments to be requisite in those who would form or new model a state; for though France has struck off into a road hitherto unexplored, and the direct contrary to this, though she has elected her Secretaries of State, her Lords of the Treasury, Chancellors of the Exchequer, Judges, Admirals, and Generals, together with Priests, Bishops, and Hangmen, from one promiscuous group of cobblers, taylors, and tinkers, hungry attornies, and police men; yet her example, I trust, will be no rule or guide for our conduct in any one instance, and especially as these new Secretaries, new Chancellors, new Generals, Judges, and Bishops, appear to manage matters but badly; and of all the new arrangements (for appointments they cannot be called) the *hangman* alone seems
to

to have *executed* his office with *effect*. I should not have said so much in this place of the affairs of that country, although they have been held out as a pattern for us to follow in this, if I had not wished your Lordship to recollect, that the talents requisite for the higher departments are not usually acquired in shops, stalls, or prisons, or caught by following the plough. What *other* academies those have been bred in, who *insist* so vociferously on *reforming* and *governing* of us, I know not, or what other arts they have been versed in, except those that require good arms and good shoulders rather than good heads ; but this I know, that as we would not willingly commit the education of our children to ignorant and illiterate masters, or the management even of our horses to unskilful grooms, it is incumbent on us to have some regard into whose hands we commit the management
of

of the commonwealth ; and that if we will not have persons of distinguished rank and fortune to be our rulers, who are the least likely to play us foul as we have the greatest stake at hazard, it behoves us, for our own credit and safety, to have men of parts and education, in whose abilities and judgment we may venture to confide, and whose known integrity will secure our property from waste or depredation.

In short, it is our duty, and I am sure it is our interest, to have a care of two things ; first, that villanies be not encouraged with the rewards of virtue, which they will be, if the lowest and most profligate characters, by dint of violence and of numbers, obtain the power of the state ; secondly, that the authority and majesty of the government of this great nation be not defiled and exposed to public contempt, by the intrusion of men into
it

it who are objects of public aversion, as they would be of public justice, if our laws possessed even the smallest portion of that severity with which they have been so unwarrantably reproached.

Having said sufficient on the subject of what these reformers call an *abuse*, I will not take notice of their insolence in pretending to *instruct* us in the doctrine of *equal rights*, which they have lately broached, and would willingly establish, until they have pulled down monarchy, and reduced the Throne and Nobility to a level with themselves, the better to usurp the power of the one and the property of the other, and then the enigma of equal rights will be woefully explained to us. Their meaning, indeed, is pretty evident, from their rags and ragged fortunes, but much more so from their dissolute manners and morals. We are no longer uninformed that these rights mean

no right at all, although they would persuade us that our advantage is the only object they have in view. This promise, so delusive in the hope, and so ruinous in the event, resembles the compositions of apothecaries, who are used to mix something of relish, something grateful to the taste, to qualify their bitter drugs, which would otherwise be spit out, and never swallowed.

That such doctrines should be publicly recommended and maintained, is very astonishing; and still more so, that the authors and promulgators of them should not be punished; for if this licence is to be allowed, and the public is to be disturbed by the senseless dreams, or discontented clamours of wild or factious men, it would be much better that we return again to a state of nature, where, at least, we would be certain of having *one* right secured to us—the right of the strongest. It has ever
been

been the first and principal object of mankind, in all well-regulated governments, to preserve the public tranquillity, as on that alone depends the preservation of life and property; and while they admit a fair and decent discussion of the general interests of the community, to prohibit, under the severest penalties, whatever is likely to bring them into hazard. Indeed the very terms, *society and government*, imply certain rules and obligations incumbent upon those to observe and obey who are benefited and protected by them; and without this observance and submission on their part, the laws would be without energy and effect, and the magistrate without authority. The lives and fortunes of individuals would be in constant jeopardy, and mutual confidence would no longer exist. No man in his sober senses, I am sure, would covet to live in a society where

where every thing, except mischief and ruin, is fluctuating and uncertain, and where no one purpose for which men associate together is answered. There is nothing very pleasing in such a prospect; nothing seductive in such conditions; and yet it is precisely to this dangerous and precarious state, and that with an accumulating velocity, that the doctrine of EQUAL RIGHTS directly tends. If all men were equally wise and good, their purity and sagacity would supersede the necessity of laws; their discernment would lead them to select, and their rectitude to prefer and adopt, whatever was prudent or just; to avoid that which was wrong or improper: but the misfortune is, that all men are not equally sensible and honest, and while nature marks their minds and hearts with such strong and striking inequalities, these distinctions will also continue to mark the different societies into which mankind, for their

individual safety, are compelled to enter. Destroy these wholesome, these necessary distinctions in civil life, and *idleness* will lord it over industry; the *blockhead* will out-top the man of sense; and the *knave* supplant the man of honour:—a very Babel of confusion will ensue, and the distracted community become a prey to Calibans and Trinculos without end. Let this rabble of politicians and legislators, issuing forth like so many dæmons from their infernal abodes, with the base coinage of their wicked and distempered brains in their mouths, say what they will to the contrary, there ever have been, and ever will be, in all human societies, *beadles* for vagabonds, and *hangmen* for rogues and assassins. While some men are lazy, and some are profligate, it will be necessary to force the one to work, and the other to keep within bounds; hence the origin of *punishments*: and recompense being certainly due to those, who by their genius,

nius,

nus, their bravery, or their fidelity, serve the commonwealth, no one will deny the equity and utility of *rewards*: from hence proceed the distinctions so much complained of by these apostles for what is called reformation, but which, in fact, means licence; for on whom, my Lord, are those titles and distinctions bestowed, but on those who fight our battles on sea or on shore, who defend our property from chicane, or who watch over our civil and religious liberties? in a word, on our Admirals and Generals, our Judges and Statesmen?

This system of *equality* lately preached among us is certainly intended to injure those who have *nothing* to gain, and to benefit those who have *nothing* to lose: from whence it is evident, that it is not so much the *titles* of the Nobility and Gentry, as the well-earned fruits of their

talents; their integrity, and honourable scars, that they covet. They may be envious of the fame and merit of our Warriors and Legislators, but it is the reward of that merit which they wish to seize; and the only way by which they can hope to seize it, is to cry down the King, Lords, and Commons, and force themselves into notice and authority in their room. Such are the designs of the men whom your Lordship affects to patronise, and whose patronage you would be compelled to court in your turn should they carry their point—such the pretensions, my Lord, that we are called upon to resist; and though we may not be able to teach them better manners, though we may find it difficult to shame them into silence, and though knaves sometimes get into power by force, and fools by chance; an universal choice and
election

election of knaves and fools for Government was never yet made by any who were not themselves like those they chose.

These doctrines, maintained with a vehemence and effrontery to which we were strangers until the epoch of the French Revolution, are not the natural growth and produce of this temperate soil, but that of France, where it has become the fashion, of late, to think every man equally qualified for the arduous offices of state, and where all men are become Kings, Ministers, Judges, Admirals, Generals, Bishops, and Statesmen. This arrangement is held to be perfectly conformable to the unalienable rights of man, and as such, recommended to our example.

I am provoked to find that the more an event, calamitous in itself, and fatal to millions is reprobated by all honest
and

and sensible men, the more it is recommended by the weak and profligate among us—as if poverty was preferable to affluence; a tempest to a calm; risque to security; and anarchy to order! The effrontery with which the French Revolution is constantly held up to us for admiration, seems to augment in proportion to the contempt with which it is treated. The partisans of the new Government in France (if a state of constant tumult and uproar, productive of mischief, bloodshed, and ruin, can be called a Government) insist that we should imitate the example of our neighbours.—They still contend that the National Convention in France should legislate not only for themselves but for others—that this piebald mixture of cobblers, taylor, cooks, barbers, and attornies, are the only men of science; the only legislators capable of directing the affairs of this lower world;

world; alone worthy to govern mankind; and that *wisdom* and *equity* are to be found no where but in their decrees. Wisdom and equity are high-sounding words, and generally the loudest in the mouths of those, my Lord, who have the least share of either; but high-sounding as they are, they certainly have a meaning, and that meaning is as obvious to us, and certainly as much within the scope of our capacities, as it is within the comprehension of those who pretend to judge what is best for us. I believe, my Lord, that the sense which I have affixed to these words, corresponds exactly with that which is given to them by the first men in point of rank, and no less so in point of abilities, that this country ever produced; of men, my Lord, whose names will ever be dear to their country, while honour and splendid talents have any hold on its affections. In the name

of Heaven, my Lord, for the appeal should be awful and solemn that relates to the present and future happiness of mankind, what infatuation, what phrensy is this, that stimulates you to qualify as improvements what has proved fatal to millions? What madness, imbecillity, or profligacy must have seized a mind, formed for better purposes and fitted to better pursuits, that seriously gives to the foulest crimes and most extended mischiefs, the virtues and dignified appellations of wisdom and of justice! Turn your eyes, my Lord, from that august, that venerable assembly, in which the valour of your ancestors gave you the right to deliberate—from that dignified body, whose authority your conduct has a tendency to degrade and annihilate—and behold without horror and indignation, if you can, the terrible effects of that wisdom and of that justice which your Lordship would seduce

seduce us to imitate. Let us examine to what extremes of violence and absurdity this novel doctrine of equal rights may be carried. Let us examine, my Lord, if in the unqualified acceptation which has been given to it by the French Convention, it differs from the wild and ferocious fury of tigers. In order to bring the subject more fully before you, and more immediately home to your feelings and person, let us suppose that the enemies of the British Constitution had succeeded in obtaining a National Assembly in this country, similar to the one which wrested the sceptre from the imperfect grasp of Louis the Sixteenth, and from the laws their entire force, splendour, and dignity. Let us imagine, my Lord, for a moment (and pray Heaven the fiction may never be realised!) that Great Britain is precisely in the same situation as France was in 1790, and that an impartial person with a cou-

rage proportioned to his zeal, knowledge, and patriotism, ascended the tribune, resolved at all events to expose to his deluded countrymen the deplorable condition to which they were reduced.

In all probability his discourse would be as follows; and I trust it will not be the less acceptable to your Lordship for its being a literal translation of a pathetic remonstrance of the hapless Clermont de Tonnerre, who, like many others, was dragged under and torn to pieces by the wheel, which having set in motion they had neither the courage nor dexterity to stop.

“ There is no saying to what violence,
 “ absurdity, and injustice this novel doctrine of equal rights may be extended.
 “ Let us strip it of its fascinating and delusive dress, let us analyse this strange
 “ creed, which it is impossible to comprehend, and no less so to practise, and see
 “ to what it is reduced, when naked and
 “ deprived

“ deprived of that fine and infectious taint
 “ fel which has dazzled your sight and
 “ corrupted your minds.

“ The doctrine, in fact, reduces itself
 “ to this—I am a man—consequently, I
 “ am free ; no man is or can be my superior ;
 “ this world was created for me,
 “ and not being accountable to any one
 “ for my actions, I will do what I please :
 “ having neither fortune nor industry, I
 “ address myself to the first rich man that
 “ I meet, and demand the half of his property ;
 “ he has the temerity to refuse
 “ me—I present the decree of the National
 “ Assembly with one hand, and a
 “ pistol with the other—demonstrate to
 “ him, that the Legislature whom he
 “ supports, and whom he is bound by
 “ oath to obey, has decided, that the nobility
 “ and gentry have no longer any
 “ patrimony ; that the rights they possessed,
 “ by inheritance or purchase, are

“ transferred to the nation, of which I
 “ form a part, and that I claim nothing
 “ but what is absolutely and justly my
 “ due. Having no lodging, I fix myself
 “ in the first convenient mansion that
 “ suits me, and if my neighbour has a
 “ pretty wife or daughter, I will possess
 “ myself of one or the other, or both, if
 “ I like it. There is nothing more rea-
 “ sonable, according to the rights we have
 “ recently discovered and obtained.—
 “ Such, my countrymen and fellow-citi-
 “ zens, or rather my fellow-sufferers, is
 “ the language that is held in the Pro-
 “ vinces—such the practice at present in
 “ vogue, and such the strange interpret-
 “ ation that has been given to the doc-
 “ trines lately broached amongst us—of
 “ the rights of man! Such is the abo-
 “ minable perversion!—such the abuses
 “ that have already been committed, un-
 “ der the pretext of equality; and Heaven
 “ alone

“ alone can tell where the miseries already commenced will terminate !

“ In the name of wonder, from whence comes this blind and unaccountable submission to the decrees of an Assembly, composed of all that is vile and illiterate ? They have usurped the sovereign authority, and they hold you in a state of vassalage, more dreadful, and infinitely more disgraceful, than what you or your ancestors ever experienced under the ancient form of government. You do not believe that you are slaves, because you have been told that you are free. Your ears have been tickled with high-sounding words, and their testimony is to contradict the evidence of your senses ! You are goaded, and you do not feel ; you are laughed at, and will not perceive it ; you are on the edge of a precipice, and will neither see nor avoid the gulph below you !—

“ Open

“ Open your eyes and tremble at the hor-
 “ rors that surround you ! Behold reli-
 “ gion degraded from her sublime and
 “ consolatory functions ; her ministers
 “ persecuted and plundered ; your nobi-
 “ lity beggared and banished ; your be-
 “ loved sovereign a close prisoner ; his
 “ life menaced, and his hapless, helpless
 “ infants advancing, not to splendour
 “ and independence, but to sorrow, mi-
 “ fery, and disgrace, and that with more
 “ rapidity than they advance to matu-
 “ rity ! Do you think the picture over-
 “ charged—or that the distress I have de-
 “ scribed is confined solely to the King
 “ and his family ? No ! it has pervaded
 “ the entire nation ; the calamity is ge-
 “ neral, and the country is ruined ! You
 “ have neither trade nor commerce to
 “ animate industry, or feed the millions
 “ that lived by the sweat of their brow !
 “ Your artificers, thrown out of employ-
 “ ment,

“ ment, infest your streets as mendicants,
 “ or your highways as robbers! The
 “ revenue, materially injured by the ge-
 “ neral stagnation of traffic, bears no pro-
 “ portion to an heavy and increased ex-
 “ penditure! The fraudulent expedient
 “ of paper-money, called in aid to the
 “ alarming deficiency, cannot answer the
 “ current expences of the nation ; and as
 “ its value is decreasing daily in the pub-
 “ lic opinion, its depression, and the total
 “ extinction of public credit, must accele-
 “ rate the bankruptcy we have so long
 “ expected. Look to the administration
 “ of the kingdom, if it can be so called
 “ without an abuse of the word, and you
 “ will discover nothing but universal
 “ gloom, distrust, and confusion! nothing
 “ conspicuous but despondency, and the
 “ wide-extended mischiefs that desolate
 “ the country, from the Pyrenees to the
 “ Rhine! Look to the police of Paris,

“ so much admired by all Europe, before
 “ the Revolution, and compare its former
 “ state with what it is at present ! The
 “ best regulated city in the world is
 “ become a receptacle for vagabonds,
 “ thieves, and assassins, who commit
 “ their depredations in the broad glare
 “ of day, in defiance of the THING
 “ whom you have decorated with the
 “ title of Mayor, and of your Comman-
 “ der in Chief.—In the former, we be-
 “ hold a magistrate without respect ; in
 “ the latter, a general without authority ;
 “ and to such *beings* (God help us !) is
 “ the safety of this vast metropolis, and
 “ indeed of the whole nation, confided !
 “ You say that you are no longer slaves ;
 “ if so, from whence proceeds that respect
 “ for those numerous Committees of Se-
 “ cret Inquiry more arbitrary in their
 “ execution, and more terrible in their ef-
 “ fects, than the most confirmed despo-
 “ tism ?

“ tism? What is the real intent of those
 “ dark Committees? Surely you need not
 “ be told, that it is to extinguish the
 “ poor remains you yet possess of honour
 “ and humanity, to eradicate, in your
 “ minds, every sentiment of dignity and
 “ virtue, and to familiarize you with
 “ scenes of blood, by rendering you as-
 “ sassin and informers!

“ You are not slaves, and why? Be-
 “ cause you have dethroned your King,
 “ whose sole study it has been to render
 “ you happy, and whose reward, for all
 “ the paternal kindness he has shewn
 “ you, may be death—the murder of his
 “ young and unoffending offspring, and the
 “ extinction of his name and family!—
 “ The other proofs you have given of your
 “ freedom, are no less glorious—you have
 “ attempted to assassinate the Queen; and
 “ you again menace her, that if the Em-
 “ peror, as chief of the Empire, should be

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“ obliged

“ obliged to support the claims of the
 “ Princes whom you have plundered,
 “ that you will display her bleeding head,
 “ severed from her mangled shoulders, on
 “ a pole ! Houses have been pillaged and
 “ burnt ; their unoffending inhabitants
 “ driven into exile or wantonly massacred,
 “ and all the legal restraints removed from
 “ men, whose depravity of minds, more
 “ than their desperate fortunes, urge
 “ them to riot, robbery, and murder !

“ Just heavens ! What a world of mis-
 “ chief has a few months produced ! and
 “ to complete this sad eventful history,
 “ the empire of a great nation, of a nation
 “ that has made Europe tremble—anni-
 “ hilated for ever ! If it is yet possible
 “ to awaken you from your infatuation,
 “ open your eyes, and behold your de-
 “ plorable condition ! Are you happier
 “ than you were before the Revolution ?
 “ Surely not—for you confess that you
 “ are

“ are starving; that your trade is ruined,
 “ and that you have no employment.
 “ In what then consists this boasted
 “ regeneration of the State? In what
 “ consists the superlative virtue of the
 “ new system, when it neither gives
 “ employment to the industrious, pro-
 “ tection to the weak, nor security to the
 “ affluent? You must acknowledge that
 “ the National Assembly has never stu-
 “ died your interests in any one of the De-
 “ crees that it has passed, nor meant
 “ to relieve your grievances; on the
 “ contrary, it is evident, by the Decree
 “ against the Nobility, that they would
 “ drive you to despair. As this Decree
 “ (which is meant to dissolve all ranks and
 “ distinctions, but which it never can
 “ accomplish) affects you more particu-
 “ larly than any other, it may not be
 “ improper to inquire what advantage
 “ the people can acquire, when there are
 “ no longer any Barons and Counts,

“ Dukes and Marquises, and Princes of
 “ the Blood. The peasant—will he be
 “ less a peasant when there are no more
 “ Lords? The cobbler—will he not remain
 “ so, though nobility should be destroyed?
 “ will he be elevated because the other is
 “ degraded? will he become richer, or
 “ will he live more comfortably? You
 “ are convinced to the contrary. What
 “ then do you gain by this absurd and ex-
 “ travagant law? Nothing. Then I will
 “ tell you what you lose by it—twenty
 “ thousand workmen, at least, are im-
 “ poverished and reduced to beggary, whose
 “ business it was to fabricate livery-cloths
 “ and laces; and not only these manufac-
 “ turers are injured by this Decree, but the
 “ merchants who import the raw mate-
 “ rials, the shopkeeper who vends them
 “ when manufactured; and, surely, it
 “ needs no great pains to convince you,
 “ that if you persecute the class in society
 “ that consumes the most, your trade
 “ will

“ will be ruined, and your town rendered
 “ a desert. The riches and opulence of
 “ this great town was occasioned by the
 “ great concourse with which it abounded
 “ of nobility and men of considerable
 “ property : its vicinity to the most bril-
 “ liant Court in Europe, and its being
 “ the resort of innumerable strangers of
 “ the first distinction, who spent the
 “ greatest part of their incomes amongst
 “ you. If you deprive your own nobility
 “ of the means of obtaining the luxuries
 “ furnished by yourselves, the inferior
 “ orders of society, which always imitate
 “ the great, will, of course, be obliged to
 “ relinquish them also, and foreigners of
 “ rank will, certainly, no longer frequent
 “ a country, where rank is regarded with
 “ horror, and treated with rigour. All this
 “ influx of money, this source of wealth
 “ to the nation, will be destroyed, and
 “ your metropolis forsaken by the nobi-
 “ lity,

" lity, and people of fortune will ne-
 " cessarily be deserted by those who de-
 " pended on them for support. This it
 " well behoves you to reflect upon; but
 " is there even one decree by which you
 " can say that you are substantially be-
 " nefited? What is become of the im-
 " mense property which has been confis-
 " cated from its ancient and legal pro-
 " prietors, under the infamous pretext of
 " converting it to *your* use? You have
 " been told, that you have no longer any
 " duties to discharge, or rents to pay to
 " your landlords. This is the first in-
 " stance, upon record, of a Legislature
 " committing a public and deliberate
 " theft on the property of thousands;
 " but atrocious and horrible as the act
 " in itself is, the consequences resulting
 " from it are still more so: it has excited
 " you to robbery and revolt, without
 " permitting you to derive any thing
 " from

“ from your crimes, but the infamy be-
 “ longing to them. You have beggared
 “ the proprietors of land, and your for-
 “ tunes are not mended ; on the con-
 “ trary, they are worse ! The duties you
 “ formerly paid were so trifling, that they
 “ were scarce perceptible ; for the half-
 “ crown that you annually paid, you
 “ received an hundred. The payment of
 “ this trifle could be no object to you in-
 “ dividually, but taken collectively, it
 “ was a very great one to your landlord :
 “ it was his subsistence ; it enabled him to
 “ employ you, to administer relief to you
 “ in the moment of distress, and to aid
 “ your helpless families. Deprived of
 “ the means, he can no longer fly to
 “ your succour, even if he had the in-
 “ clination, and could forget your ingra-
 “ titude !

“ Agriculture is suspended by his ab-
 “ sence ; the cheerful farm is become a
 “ mi-

“ miserable desert ; the fields no longer
 “ bear a rich and luxuriant crop ; and far
 “ from being benefited by the exemption,
 “ much heavier taxes than ever are laid
 “ on you, and augmented in proportion as
 “ your ability to pay them decreases ! You
 “ rejoice in your exemption from tithes, but
 “ you forget that the tax imposed upon
 “ you in their stead, is far more oppressive.
 “ Let the harvest, in future, be good or
 “ bad, you must pay the same ; whereas,
 “ formerly, if the season proved unkind,
 “ the priest had nothing to receive ; you
 “ were not accountable for the caprice
 “ of the weather, and were only held to
 “ pay in proportion as it was favourable,
 “ and the soil you cultivated was grate-
 “ ful.

“ The change has placed you in a
 “ worse situation than it found you.
 “ The inundation that drowns the rich
 “ crop ; the torrent that washes it away ;
 “ the

“ the blight that destroys, and the tem-
 “ pest that sweeps it to a level with the
 “ earth, are of no avail : the rector and
 “ vicar must be paid, and you not only
 “ lose the produce of your labour, but
 “ you are now obliged to advance money
 “ out of your pockets !

“ You have been told, that the Ga-
 “ belle is suppressed, and so it ought to
 “ be ; I was the first to propose it : but
 “ is this solitary and partial benefit to
 “ compensate for all the evils you endure,
 “ or to atone for your paying one hun-
 “ dred and twenty millions (1,250,000l.
 “ sterling) in lieu of the sixty to which
 “ the old tax upon salt amounted ? These
 “ calculations are not beyond your capa-
 “ city, if you will give yourselves the trou-
 “ ble to reflect. And when you come to
 “ strike a balance of debtor and creditor,
 “ and compare what you have LOST with
 “ what you have *gained*, Lord have

H

“ mercy

“ mercy upon those who have deceived
“ you !

“ In order to dazzle your eyes, as well
“ as your understandings, you have been
“ treated (that is, at your own expence)
“ with what your *honest* masters are
“ pleased to call a Confederation.

“ The enthusiasm, or rather the de-
“ lirium of the moment (and pray Hea-
“ ven it may only be the delirium of
“ a moment!) is certainly favourable
“ to their purpose: not content with
“ putting you to the daily and enor-
“ mous expence of 24,000 livres (1050l.
“ sterling) for their daily support, they
“ have made preparations to celebrate the
“ destruction of their country, so im-
“ mense and so expensive, that they would
“ have alarmed even the ostentatious
“ and unfeeling prodigality of Louis the
“ XIVth.

“ But what is expence; what are the
“ mines

“ mines of Peru and Mexico, compared
 “ to the capture of the Bastile ! the
 “ governor of which lost his head
 “ long before you took it off his shoul-
 “ ders, or you would never have ta-
 “ ken it ; and who having neither
 “ troops, ammunition, nor provision,
 “ might be expected to surrender the in-
 “ stant he was attacked. Great proof of
 “ magnanimity, truly, to disarm a dozen
 “ old men with rusty firelocks, without
 “ powder or ball ! Yet this is the heroic
 “ feat, for which such vast preparations
 “ were made, and which you have the
 “ vanity to suppose that other nations
 “ will celebrate, with the same degree of
 “ folly that you have done ! But for what
 “ purpose is all this parade ? Is it to re-
 “ joice at the demolition of an old for-
 “ tress, which was formidable only to
 “ those whom you now trample under
 “ foot ? for the nobility alone were con-

“fined in it, and had the most reason to
 “complain of it. The *Bicêtre*, and other
 “common jails, were allotted for your re-
 “ception, and they exist still: there you
 “are still confined, and they are more
 “crowded than ever. Hence *confinement*,
 “you see, is not abolished in this land of
 “*freedom*! on the contrary, your fellow-
 “citizens are piled one upon another,
 “three deep, in these loathsome dun-
 “geons, not charged with any specific
 “crime, but merely suspected of the sin
 “of aristocracy—that is, of preferring or-
 “der to anarchy—they have been im-
 “mured for months, separated from the
 “world, and prohibited all correspond-
 “ence with their friends and relations,
 “without the least prospect of their being
 “brought to a fair and equitable trial;
 “yet this, in the new vocabulary of the
 “Jacobins, is called Liberty.

“That the tumult may be as great as
 “possible,

“ possible, and disorder perpetuated, the
 “ whole nation was invited to assist at this
 “ grand Confederation.

“ Prostitute scribblers, without talents
 “ or principle, assure you, that neither
 “ Athens nor Rome ever produced any
 “ thing half so magnificent. Not that
 “ you know much of the matter, or wish
 “ to know ; you believe it, and that’s
 “ enough. But for what purpose are you
 “ assembled ? Is it to swear fidelity to the
 “ King ? You have already done it. Is
 “ it to swear fidelity to the Constitution ?
 “ Where is it ? Prove to me that such a
 “ thing really exists in France, and what-
 “ ever form or shape it may have, I will
 “ swear to maintain it at the hazard of
 “ my life and fortune ; my oath, degraded
 “ as the class is to which I belong, is yet
 “ of some value, and will have some
 “ weight in the country.

“ Deluded, cozened fools ! you have

“ no

“ no Constitution ! But you say that
 “ you are to have one—that is, you have
 “ been told so—and that it cannot be
 “ otherwise, because the King has given
 “ his sanction. And are you really so ea-
 “ sily deceived ? Are you really so blind
 “ or so stupid as not to see that your King
 “ is no longer a King ? that, descending
 “ voluntarily from his throne to receive
 “ and redress your complaints, he was
 “ dragged, by the rude hand of ruffian
 “ violence, to the bottom, and stripped
 “ at once of his crown and sceptre : the
 “ mantle of royalty has been torn from
 “ his shoulders, and even the very sha-
 “ dow of authority taken from him !

“ Do not you perceive that he is more
 “ a slave than any of you ? that his
 “ sanction and nothing mean the same
 “ thing ; and that if a decree, prohibiting
 “ those who have breeches to wear them,
 “ should be presented to him for accept-

“ ance, he would be compelled to give it
 “ his sanction, as he was to the test oath
 “ prescribed for the clergy, on the 27th
 “ of last November, and which would
 “ have rested neglected and contemned,
 “ without effect, but for the potent and
 “ auxiliary aid of the mob? What merit,
 “ what virtue can there be in a sanction,
 “ where a negative is denied?—Has the
 “ King a right to refuse? You know
 “ that he has not. What an insult
 “ then to common sense to talk of
 “ the Royal Assent! In the same man-
 “ ner, taxes upon taxes are imposed
 “ to the full amount of thirty-six per
 “ cent. on your incomes, more than
 “ what you paid under the ancient sys-
 “ tem; yet enormous and oppressive as
 “ they are, you cannot refuse to pay them
 “ without being guilty of perjury. But
 “ could you get over this obstacle, and
 “ which may not be very difficult, con-
 “ sidering

“ sidering the torrent of irreligion and im-
 “ morality with which we are inundated,
 “ how will you be able to get clear of the
 “ soldiery? They have sworn to enforce
 “ obedience to the decrees of the National
 “ Assembly, and the bayonet, you well
 “ know, is an effectual remedy for a flex-
 “ ible conscience. You must not ima-
 “ gine that the military will perjure
 “ themselves a *second* time to indulge your
 “ convenience or caprice, unless, indeed,
 “ you can add ten sols (five-pence) a day
 “ to their pay, and secure it to them for
 “ ever. In this manner, you all know,
 “ they were first debauched; and do you
 “ think that the National Assembly (as
 “ it calls itself) will permit you to turn
 “ the tables upon them by a similar ma-
 “ nœuvre? If you do, you have less
 “ sense than I thought you had. But
 “ lest the army and militia should not
 “ be disposed to go all lengths with your
 “ present

“ present tyrants, the mob has been en-
 “ lifted into their service. By this annual
 “ sacrifice of forty-five millions of the
 “ public revenue (two millions sterling*)
 “ wine and brandy, in Paris, have been
 “ purposely lowered in price, while bread,
 “ meat, and all the necessaries of life, are
 “ dearer than ever. For what purpose
 “ is this difference, but to keep the bulk
 “ of the people in a constant state of in-
 “ toxication, lest, in a lucid interval of
 “ reason, they should become sensible of
 “ their melancholy situation, and take
 “ ample vengeance on the authors of
 “ their misfortunes? It is not very easy

* This is rather understated, for Mr. Necker esti-
 mates les droits d'entrée at full forty-eight millions of
 French livres, and this calculation will not appear ex-
 travagant, when it is considered that every article, with-
 out exception, paid a duty on entering Paris: wine,
 for example, paid near five sols each bottle (full two-
 pence halfpenny English).

“ to guess by what means this consider-
 “ able loss of revenue will be supplied;
 “ the duties paid on entering of the town
 “ were too important to have been idly
 “ relinquished, and especially as the be-
 “ nefits resulting from their abolition can
 “ be no object. In addition to the loss
 “ sustained, the State must make a suit-
 “ able provision for those who were em-
 “ ployed to collect those duties, and hence
 “ new taxes become necessary. The
 “ church has no more lands to lose and
 “ nothing to give. The nobility, indeed,
 “ have yet something left, and the soli-
 “ tary million of livres (43,656 l. 5s. ster-
 “ ling) to which you have cut down the
 “ Princes of the Blood, may yet, perhaps,
 “ be thought too much, and be reduced
 “ to half that sum. But even these de-
 “ predations and retrenchments will not
 “ produce forty-five millions of livres.
 “ And, surely, it is worthy of your atten-
 “ tion

“ tion to inquire how this deficiency is to
 “ be made good, and whether the de-
 “ struction of the barriers was not a com-
 “ pliment to the rabble of Paris, to secure
 “ their good-humour, and, in case of ne-
 “ cessity, their support. Such is the true
 “ state of your affairs, and yet you deem
 “ those acts lawful and just ! The sober
 “ part of mankind, believe me, think very
 “ different ; they consider them as usurpa-
 “ tions and oppressions ! and so will you,
 “ when the film is removed that obscures
 “ your sight. Now behold the sum to-
 “ tal of your calamities, and blush at the
 “ infamy you have entailed upon your
 “ name and country for ages !

“ Behold your King a captive, and his
 “ life in danger ! Your Queen, whose sex
 “ alone entitles her to respect, daily in-
 “ sulted, and holding her existence at the
 “ mercy of a ferocious and sanguinary
 “ rabble !

“ The innocent offspring of your Sovereign witness to the unmerited persecutions of their unhappy father, partaking of his misfortunes whilst he lives, and doomed to inherit them when he is dead !

“ Your courts of justice abolished, and claims of property to an enormous amount left undecided.

“ The arbitrary will of a licentious mob, or the more methodical despotism of the army, supplying the place of law !

“ The Metropolis in constant riot and alarm !

“ The Provinces deluged in blood by civil commotion !

“ Your Colonies in rebellion to your authority, and at war amongst themselves !

“ Your manufactures languishing—

“ Your commerce almost annihilated—

“ No

“ No money in the country, and the
“ paper of little value—

“ Your fellow-citizens, of rank and
“ fortune, driven into exile, and the mil-
“ lions who lived by their splendour, be-
“ come a ponderous and dangerous bur-
“ then to the State—

“ Sons fighting against their fathers,
“ and brothers against brothers; every
“ man armed suspicious of an enemy in
“ his neighbour; and the whole nation,
“ as it were, in open hostility against itself
“ and all the world!

“ These are facts, melancholy existing
“ facts, the effects of which you will woe-
“ fully feel, whenever you recover from
“ your present delirium.

“ Can you reconcile them with the
“ principles on which Society exists,
“ or on which any Government what-
“ ever can be supported? You know
“ that you cannot. What honest and

“ sensible man then, but must wish in
 “ his heart, that the authority awarded to
 “ the King should be confirmed, and the
 “ laws respected—without which the
 “ horrors of anarchy will augment daily,
 “ the infamous authors of the public dis-
 “ tress, in order to attach the ragged,
 “ the indigent, and profligate to their
 “ cause, will, when they can no longer
 “ bribe them with money or assignats,
 “ stimulate them to pillage your houses,
 “ divide your estates, and the massacre of
 “ your army will follow the plunder of
 “ your fortunes.”

Such was the pathetic discourse of a
 man whose benevolence of heart and puri-
 ty of mind could not shield him from the
 malevolence of suspicion. He was among
 the first who fell a victim to the intrigues
 and cabals of men who had made him
 the instrument of their criminal ambition.
 Believe me, my Lord, this melancholy
 detail

detail of the calamities of his unhappy country is not exaggerated. Contrast then, I beseech you, the ruin he describes and felt, with the blessings which you contemplate and enjoy. Behold your country flourishing and free in commercial profitable intercourse with the four quarters of the habitable globe; happy at home and respected abroad! Behold the Thames cheerful, animated, and industrious, floating to the proud metropolis of Britain the rich tributes of the known world; while the Seine, pensive, disconsolate, and furcharged with blood, ebbs mournfully and dejected a crimson current to the sea! Reflect on the gloom and havoc which mark one country, and on the joy and prosperity diffused throughout the other. That other, my Lord, is your own; and as the wealth, grandeur, and felicity she displays are incontrovertible proofs of

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the wisdom and equity of her Government, spurn I conjure you the vermin who would impress on your too facile mind a contrary opinion, in order to embark you in schemes of guilt and dishonour. Whichever way you direct your attention, you find affluence and content, freedom and happiness; and with such strong vouchers before you of comfort and security, can your Lordship question the prosperous condition of your country? If France felt herself enslaved (and who can doubt it?) she did well to break her fetters; but what chains, what bondage, have Englishmen to break, and what knowledge can they derive from their sanguinary neighbours, but the foul register of their crimes and misfortunes, the black and voluminous catalogue of unprovoked cruelties, proscriptions, and massacres? Yet under this terrible pressure

sure of accumulated infamy we are told the French are wise and happy ! My Lord, it is impossible ; for guilt and happiness are incompatible.

It is not denied that the abuse in the ancient Government of France called loudly for redress. It is universally acknowledged that those who had the management of the public interest in that distracted kingdom, had oppressed the people by exorbitant taxes, and beggared the treasury by the most scandalous profusion and embezzlement. The vexations were certainly enormous, and the mischiefs of an extent that required to be instantly stopped, but there was not virtue enough in the country to accomplish the desired reform ; and when it was attempted, a number of factious discontented people blazed forth, who bark at all abuses but those which they commit. These discontented people (such, my Lord, as are to

be found in all nations) obtained by clamour and intrigue admission into the legislative assemblies, and abusing the innocent simplicity of their countrymen, they changed their tone ; and wresting from the King, already a cypher in his dominions, the small remains of power he possessed, insisted that the right to reform and establish rested solely with them, and that the duty of the sovereign was merely to sanction what they decided.

The right to approve implies a right to condemn, and it would be hard indeed if those who have the privilege to receive had not also the liberty to reject. This appears to be the foundation, the very basis, as it were, of all equity ; but the obligation to absolutely receive, and positively to approve of *every* thing, is a tyranny of a nature more foul in its completion, and more diabolical in its consequences, than any that has been transmitted to us from ancient

cient times, and which certainly exceeds every example that modern history can produce of oppression and vexation. Yet such is the tyranny which factious, seditious, and enterprising men in France exercise at this instant over their degraded countrymen, and which factious, seditious, and enterprising men in our country, my Lord, would, if they could, introduce and establish in this.

Such has been the equity, the *justice*, and *decency* of the French ; I beg your Lordship to examine what has been their WISDOM : they have destroyed the old form of Government, because it was bad, and they replaced it by a wild and remorseless despotism—the despotism of thousands, who issued from all the night-houses, gambling-houses, brothels, and dunghills in France, the instant the National Assembly reduced the King from being the first man in point of power in

the nation, to be the last ! If the French really possessed this wonderful knowledge, this extraordinary skill in the science of government, what excuse can be offered, or what good reason can be given for their having left their country a prey to civil discord for near four years ? and what must the world think of this boasted capacity, so much cried up by designing knaves in that country, and repeated like so many echoes by their associates, and the senseless blockheads they have seduced in this, when it cannot stop the mischiefs, nor put an end to the confusion that reigns in every part of that ruined country ?

Under the pretence of reforming the different departments in the state, they abolished them ; and if abolition means reformation, no reformation I confess was ever so extensive and complete, for there is not a vestige at this hour remaining of
any

any one establishment, either civil, military, or ecclesiastic, that existed on the 14th of July 1789. The soldiery have long since rejected all discipline; and as to the church, it has been so pared and cut down, that the venerable edifice is no longer known, even to themselves. In a word, there is no Government in France, and where there is no Government, there can be no liberty; all order, decency, and subordination are at an end. This is what the philosophy of the times calls reducing things to their first principles; that is, dissolving all the ties of society, cancelling all obligations to God from man, and between man and man, in order to begin the world anew—Kings, Magistrates, Priests, Soldiers, and all the different springs, checks, and securities of social life are dissolved into one common mass, and man reduced to his forlorn and primitive condition, without succour, protection,

tection, or comfort of any kind—reduced to the savage state of his rude and uncultivated ancestors, immersed in all the evils attendant on the vagrant and defenceless lives they led in woods and deserts, without the plea of ignorance to excuse it, and without their purity and simplicity to console him; and this it is that the little knots of obscure individuals, in different parts of this kingdom, assuming to themselves the consequence of legalised assemblies, and meeting in bye holes and corners, have the insolence to call WISDOM; while the plunder of estates and of churches, the licence of general and indiscriminate robbery, outrage, and massacre, are termed by these same anonymous clubs of midnight legislators, to be EQUITY. But what WISDOM is there in the conduct that voluntarily spurns ease, affluence, and security, for disgraceful toil, poverty, and danger? And what rectitude

titude of mind must those possess, my Lord, who assert in the face of Heaven and the world, that the violence that wrests from its peaceable and legal possessor, the honest produce of his industry, or the property he holds by hereditary descent, the reward, perhaps, of military or of civic virtue, is wise and *EQUITABLE*? The instant these doctrines became *legalised* in France, they were practised, and the practice has extended from Paris to St. Domingo, and to all her distant possessions in the East and in the West. This new-discovered wisdom has converted the happiness of the affluent planters into misery; changed hope into despondency, and rendered even existence itself painful, and almost dishonourable.

The Negroes, adopting the *EQUITABLE* maxims of the great lawgivers in France, after having set fire to the plantations of their benevolent masters; plundered their
 bene-

benefactors, ravished and murdered their wives and daughters, are themselves compelled to seek refuge in the recesses of steep and difficult mountains; from whose barren and inhospitable summits they contemplate in grief and despondency the valleys in which they have spread devastation and ruin, and in which they revelled, when the setting sun, releasing them from labour, dismissed them to rural sports and pastimes. Ten thousand of these hapless wretches have perished the unlamented victims of their guilt and folly—sugar-works and estates have been destroyed, to the amount of as many millions sterling—the rich commercial towns of Bourdeaux, Marseilles, Nantz, Havre, and Rouen, are reduced to a state of bankruptcy by the loss of that commerce which supported and enriched them. The planters are plunged from a state of splendour to want even the common necessaries of

life; beggary is entailed on their helpless posterity; and an island, equal in extent almost to that of England, was in a state of anarchy and confusion, that rendered equally insecure both life and property, until it fell under the dominion of Britain.

Such have been the direful effects of this junction of WISDOM and EQUITY, as it is called, and which is so impudently recommended to our example by men in this country, rendered desperate by their poverty and their crimes, and who seem to have entered into a confederacy with men of a similar description in France, for the total subversion, not only of our happy constitution, but of all order and government in the known world. Among the sad variety of woe which appears destined to mark the close of the eighteenth century, is that of attempting to accomplish the entire dissolution of all religion among us. It is the misfortune of the present time to affect

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a spirit

a spirit of toleration, not out of compassion for error, not from any particular regard for this, or that, or any other sect, but from an indifference bordering on contempt for all sects and persuasions. This *pretended* toleration is nothing more, in fact, than *concealed* atheism; I do not mean that placid and unassuming atheism which is the result of deep metaphysical research, of profound abstract reasoning, which even the mind the most virtuously disposed may, from not being able to procure the proofs necessary to its own conviction, be led to *doubt*, and then to *deny*, but that species of atheism which is the result of vice, and that is confirmed by profligate habits: the former species of atheism, the produce of *too much* or of *too little* reflection, extends no farther than the closet, for it means no ill; but the other has its source in vicious propensities, and as it can only hope for impunity in the extinction of *all* religion, it leaves no measures

measures unattempted, by which its direful contagion may spread itself over the surface of the earth. If you look to your friends, my Lord, in France, you will find the truth of this observation most woefully confirmed, by the demolition of all the fences and all the barriers which morality and piety had erected for the security of virtue: every beacon which existed heretofore has been destroyed, and the whole country exhibits a wild and sterile heath, affording neither hope nor consolation to the wayworn and bewildered traveller. This is the atheism that is extending its baneful influence throughout the habitable world; which some men are wickedly endeavouring to introduce among us, and which means *guilt*, though it professes *innocence*;—that practical and diabolical atheism, the mischievous and deformed offspring of depravity (not the mild and inoffensive child of speculation);

that licence, that blasphemes all religions, and confounds all the distinctions of right ; which is meant to sanction crimes and every species of disorder. My Lord, there is fraud legibly written on every feature of this *bastard* toleration. It means nothing less than the subversion of all ecclesiastical establishments, and to inundate the country with vice and profligacy of every description. Its object is to overwhelm the country with a torrent of irreligion and dissolute philosophy, intended to contract the heart to all sense of virtue, in proportion as it expands and adapts the mind to the reception of every species of vice and immorality. Independent of the blasphemy of such attempts ; independent of the profligacy that produced them ; and of the still greater profligacy that would result from them, if they should prove successful, there is something so intolerably gloomy in scepticism ;

ticism; something in it so directly tending to despair, that there is cruelty to mankind as well as insult and ingratitude to the Divinity, in endeavouring to slacken the bonds that connect them with heaven and eternity.

There is something so exhilarating in the very idea of religion, that, exclusive of its solemnity, and the assurance it gives of salvation and happiness hereafter, I am amazed that, on the score of mirth, and of that cheerfulness which it never fails to produce in the minds and hearts of men, that any effort should be made, or any wish formed, to stop up the source of so much present comfort and delight, and of so much future hope and consolation. Surely, my Lord, there is no subject more proper for our study and contemplation, or a question of greater moment, than the one which to a certainty involves in it not only our own immediate advantage

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tage and prosperity, but the general felicity of the whole human race ; for, take away the substantial prop of religion from civil society, and what can preserve it from anarchy and desolation ? What other sufficient security has honest industry for the produce of its well-earned labour ? and what a ruthless and savage wild will be opened to our view, if that security should be destroyed or removed ! Take away the sublime and consolatory aid of religion from man in his individual capacity, and to what a state of wretchedness and despondency do you reduce him ! In either case, my Lord, the evils which would result from this dangerous and levelling system of confounding all religions, and dissolving them, as it were, into one common mass, from whence nothing but guilt, misery, and despair can arise, are beyond all estimate. Figure to yourself the Laws deprived of their *force* ; the

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Magistrates of their *authority* ; Man of his last and dearest *hope* ; and Providence of that adoration which is due from our inferiority to its wisdom, and from our gratitude to its goodness ; and your Lordship will then have a tolerable idea of the state and condition to which those modern apostles for liberty of conscience would reduce us.

Nothing can be of greater import to society, my Lord, than the preservation of order. Without it, this world would be a savage, sterile wild, full of difficulties and of danger, affording neither peace nor comfort to its miserable and dispersed inhabitants ; and yet, my Lord, it is this very order, so necessary to our felicity and support, that sweetens existence and confirms our happiness, that your Lordship is labouring as effectually to destroy, as if its destruction had become the favourite object of your pursuits. It can be no secret.

secret (for they have voted you public thanks, and they occasionally correspond with your Lordship), that there are a set of men in this country who seek to subvert the elegant, compact, and well-tempered production of British wisdom and heroism; who arrogating to themselves the power and capacity which belong to none of us individually, but to all of us collectively, would reduce us to the insignificance of cyphers, or whatever else in their profound wisdom they would please to make of us.

For my part, I have ever considered the British Constitution as an historical painting of prodigious beauty and magnitude, executed by the most eminent masters, in which the progress of civilization from the date of Magna Charta to that of the Bill of Rights may be seen at one view; nor does it require any extraordinary effort of the imagination to personify
and

and represent to itself this vast and wonderful assemblage of laws, manners, and customs, on which the whole fabric of society has been constructed and happily brought to perfection. The mind, my Lord, dwells with pleasure on the fictions it creates, while reason, an accomplice in the cheat, shapes them into form, and deceives the judgment into a belief of their existence. The sublime and interesting picture above mentioned is constantly before me. I study it with attention, and gaze in rapture on the glorious achievements of our heroic ancestors. I behold them in the very dawn and infancy of reason, before the mild but irresistible influence of manners prevailed, *repelling* Despotism, and *restraining* Anarchy, until, from a chaos of rude and discordant materials, a rational and well harmonized system of Government arose, the pride and wonder of mankind, of which the King, Lords and Commons

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were

were declared to be the *perpetual* and *hereditary* Guardians. To them alone are confided our civil and religious liberties ; they hold them in trust for *us* and our *heirs* for ever ; and where can we find trustees of more wisdom and integrity, or of equal responsibility ? And would your Lordship join the shameless and nameless herd of beings, who, confederated in guilt, are dispersed throughout the kingdom to deface, and finally destroy this sublime and beautiful, this historical and at once instructive and amusing picture, the immense and perilous labour of ages ! the admiration of successive generations, and the best legacy we can bequeath to posterity ? I cannot, dare not, my Lord, think so ill of you ! Industrious however and zealous as these Revolution-mongers and Government-makers may be, in a business of such foul and infernal import, I trust they will be

disappointed, and that the British Constitution, superior to the rude assaults of its profligate enemies, will even triumph over the ravages of time, and continue to be the fence and rampart of religion and virtue, as it has ever been that of learning and of freedom, until it falls in the general wreck and dissolution of the world. My Lord, this bold and audacious attack was carried on under restraint and awe, and even with occasional symptoms of remorse for the atrocity of the attempt, until the officious and intemperate zeal of a man*, who is always in the

* The cowardly attack made on an unfortunate individual immured in a dungeon, and unable to defend himself from the slanders which have been advanced with a degree of impudence proportioned to their turpitude and falsehood, provoked me to vindicate his character from the illiberal aspersions of his malevolent and unfeeling adversary. I have opposed facts to assertions, and left the world to decide on the brutal insolence of a man raised into consequence more by favour than by merit;

the extremes, and whose whole life is little else than a series of contradiction, absurdities

and whose life exhibits, in strong colours, a tissue of all the meannesses which degrade our common nature.—It is proved in a publication which I have avowed, though my name is not affixed to it, that Mr. Burke has as little respect for truth, as he has for humanity in affliction. But the object of this note has no relation with the sad destiny, guilt, or innocence of M. de la Fayette : its purport is to reprobate and expose the scandalous expedient of a man (possessed of a certain degree of popularity and a shew of talents) playing with the passions and prejudices of the multitude, and practising on the easy credulity of the people, every despicable artifice that can bewilder their judgment, or degrade their capacities. It is not private history that I mean to investigate ; but the impudent profligacy and arrogance of a man in public life, who has the effrontery to hold himself out as a model of loyalty. Faulty, reprehensible, and marked by an infinity of low cunning, as his private life may be, it is beneath my censure or regard. I will not conjure from the silent mansions of the dead the ghosts of departed friends! Peace to the venerable and lamented manes of Saunders, Rockingham, and Reynolds !—Peace to the hapless injured shades of Verney and of Hargrave, let them sleep
in

dities and impudence, gave a colourable pretext to an herd of scribblers to arraign the

in quiet ; they can neither be cozened nor IMPEACHED ! I will not rake among *their* ashes, lest I should be compelled to call for *civet* to *sweeten my imagination*. But when a man comes forward in a public character, invested with a public trust, he challenges our notice, and must abide the scrutiny. Mr. Burke has ill deserved the reputation he has acquired, and his pretensions to consequence are less founded than his claims to merit. The world appears to have been steady in its judgment, and to have formed a just estimate of the value of this busy and officious meddler, until the epoch of the French revolution, when, frightened on the first alarm, it trembled for the event, and without being in danger of drowning, caught at each straw that passed. It is sometimes profitable to speculate ; and where the reward is considerable, and the risque trifling, the prudence of the adventurer will seldom be impeached. Mr. Burke has not passed through life an entire stranger to speculations of this description ; and if Beaconsfield could boast its archives, we should find records, perhaps, that some of his enterprises have been more fortunate than *judicious*. The period, however, which has been the most singularly marked by favour, and in which with the *least desert* he has

the purity of those political tenets which, decorating with all the sanctity of religion,

has gained the *most renown*, is that of the period to which I have already alluded. The house of Cavendish, compelled from necessity to adopt a system of œconomy, in the arrangements of which the maintenance of mendicant legislators could have no share, did not hold out any pleasing assurances, that the evening of his life would be as comfortable as its meridian had been brilliant. The Duke of Portland, without totally abandoning the hope that his speculations would yield most profitable returns, became less zealous for what he had little chance of obtaining; and under these distressing circumstances it is possible that Mr. Burke first conceived the idea of renouncing his old friends and connections, and to expect, by veering completely round to the opposite point of the compass, to come in for a share of the good things in this world, which he saw very little prospect of acquiring on the credit of his own name and pretensions. While he had an hope that those with whom he acted would again come into power he continued with them; but the instant he discerned the little chance of Eden being once more opened to their view, he realized the fable of the rats and the sinking ship, and left them to shift for themselves. No man, I believe, better understands a bargain,

gion, he would have imposed upon us as an orthodox creed, from which it would be the

gain, either in gross or detail, than this gentleman; while, versed in the history of the passions, he is perfect master of the ebbs and flows of our affections, and well knows how to traffic in those of others, without risque or injury to his own. Mr. Burke has with equal justice and severity censured J. J. Rousseau for the unnatural desertion of his helpless and illegitimate offspring: but what shall we say to this solemn and inflexible judge of mankind, when we behold him throwing off without provocation, compunction, sorrow, or regret, ancient and long established intimacies—spurning with disdain, and renouncing all former ties, and all those friendships which we imagined were confirmed and consolidated by the strongest of all moral cements, interest, gratitude, and misfortune?—How comes it that all these sentiments and relations, tender, impressive, and endearing as they have ever been with other men, have had such little hold on the mind of this man that they in one short moment were violently broken down, torn, burst asunder, trampled on, and dissolved, leaving neither trace nor vestige, even in his remembrance to mark their former existence?

What

the height of impiety if not blasphemy to depart.

This

What a lesson for men acting together in great public concerns! What a lesson to men engaged or desirous to engage in parties! while mankind in general may profit by the admonition it offers, and the proof it affords of the very little share which the heart has in the friendships of this world! Why did Mr. Burke desert men with whom he had so long acted in common concert, for whom he had uniformly professed the warmest attachment, whose measures he supported and applauded, till even flattery sickened at the fulsome panegyric?—What fair and just motives could he have urged in 1793 for such desertion, that would not have applied and have been equally valid in 1783? At this latter period he was disposed to go all lengths with those whose conduct was certainly not less reprehensible than it is at present: and he continued to act with them on occasions where a good man with moderate parts would have paused; where a virtuous and strong mind would have refused; and in which a corrupt one only would have joined. If this conversion or apostacy—for I will not, in mercy to the gentleman's faith and religion, call it *recantation*—is the natural and unconstrained movements of his conscience, how comes it that this

useful

This Gentleman, by his overstrained devotion, brought the whole fabric of our political

useful but neglected monitor, now so easily alarmed, allowed him to join in the conspiracy that would have stolen the diadem from the head of Majesty, to have placed it in appearance on that of his misguided son, while those about him defaced or pilfered its richest ornaments and jewels? Is it to make his peace with the sovereign whom he insulted, that he chants hymns of loyalty and psalms of gladness, morning, noon, and night? It is unnecessary; for resentment cannot exist where the virtues reside. Is it to improve a fortune, fabricated God knows how, that he pays court to authority, and, spaniel-like, licks the hand that cuffed him? I have no objection. It is perfectly indifferent to me whether he speculates in the funds or in places. Let him obtain lucrative employments for another, and reserve the emoluments for himself; the profits will enable him to improve his plantations at Beaconsfield, and to crimson still deeper with an additional glass of good Port the rosy cheeks of his venerable confessor: but do not let him in the abundance of his zeal injure those for whom he has expressed an attachment as novel as it is extraordinary; do not let him provoke a legion

political religion (if I may so express myself) into hazard—hence the virulence
with

of unprincipled scribblers to debauch, corrupt, and poison the public mind, with doctrines and maxims subversive of all order. Let him, for Heaven's sake, be discouraged from furnishing weapons (by overstrained arguments and gross misrepresentations) to Treason and Sedition to assail our wise and happy establishments in Church and State.

I aver it to be a fact, felt and acknowledged by every gentleman, without exception, with whom I have conversed on the subject, men of whose loyalty and attachment no doubt can be entertained, that it was the Reflections of Mr. Burke on the French Revolution that gave birth to the Rights of Man, Pig's Meat, and other atrocious, abominable publications, which have had a most rapid and extensive sale among that class of people the most easily inflamed, and who have ultimately the most mischief to apprehend from civil tumult and disorder.

I am firmly convinced that if Mr. Burke had not produced his book of various hues, for it is even tinged with that Jacobinism which it pretends to decry, that the pamphlets and libels with which the laws of this
country

with which it was assailed by a man more distinguished by his misfortunes than his talents,

country have been braved and infringed, would never have appeared: and for Mr. Burke to come forward with the entire history of his political life fresh in our remembrance, was an insult to our understanding, and as indifferent a proof of his modesty as it is of his sincerity. This want of consistency argues want of principle, and is much nearer allied to fraud and profligacy than to weakness or error. We trace the cloven foot and leprous mind of the author in almost every line of his book; the features of its parent are easily discovered; and we behold the legitimate offspring of truant Vice, returned penitent and ashamed of having been seduced into the paths of Virtue and of Honour. That the public, however, may the better estimate the conduct and principles of this gentleman, I have annexed complete sentences from different speeches in Parliament, which prove that he was very solicitous at some periods of his life, and when it suited his purpose, to bring the people forward from that back ground, into which he would now drive and pound them, like strayed sheep. Those whom he would now consider as forming no part, and having neither rights nor influence,

talents, and who seems to have braved
the public opinion with an effrontery
bordering

were formerly of some account; and, in his opinion,
“*their sense was to govern the legislature of this country.*”
That I may not be accused of giving partial mutilated
extracts, for the unfair purpose of holding him out to
that public for sentence or acquittal to which he has
so often appealed for judgment against others, I have
given the dates to each quotation; for it is not by ill-
founded assertions and declamations, but by facts, that
I mean to prove the little claim which he has to confi-
dence or support; nor shall any consideration on earth
force or seduce me to relinquish the vantage ground I
have obtained, until I have curbed his insolence or cor-
rected his propensities.

“The *rights of men*, that is to say, the natural rights
of mankind, are indeed sacred things; and if any public
measure is proved mischievously to affect them, the ob-
jection ought to be fatal to that measure, even if no
charter at all could be set up against it.

“If these natural rights are further affirmed and de-
clared by express covenants, if they are clearly defined
and secured against chicane, against power, and autho-
rity, by written instruments and positive engagements,
they are in a still better condition; they partake not
only

bordering upon insanity. If Mr. Burke,
by his late wilful misrepresentation of the
principles

only of the sanctity of the object so secured, but of that solemn public faith itself, which secures an object of such importance. Indeed this formal recognition, *by the sovereign power, of an original right in the subject*, can never be subverted, but *by rooting up the holding radical principles of government, and even of society itself.*"—Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill, Dec. 1, 1783, quarto edition, page 331.

"It must be granted to me that all political power which is set over men, and that all privilege claimed or exercised in exclusion of them, being wholly *artificial*, and for so much a derogation from the natural *equality* of mankind at large, ought to be some way or other exercised ultimately for their benefit.—If this is true with regard to every species of political dominion, and every description of commercial privilege, none of which can be *original self-derived rights, or grants for the mere private benefit of the holders**, then such rights or
privileges,

* Let this passage be contrasted with the following extract, which Mr. Burke has cited in his Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, for the purpose of combating and refuting it, without doing either; and it will appear that
the

principles on which the English Revolution was happily accomplished in the
last

privileges, or whatever else you choose to call them, are all in the strictest sense a TRUST; and it is in the very essence of every trust to be rendered ACCOUNTABLE, and even totally to *cease*, when it substantially varies from the purposes for which alone it could have a lawful existence.

“This I conceive, sir, to be true of trusts of power vested in the highest hands, and of such as seem to hold of no human creature.”—Speech on Mr. Fox’s East India Bill, Dec. 1, 1783, quarto edition, page 333.

“I ground myself therefore on this principle—*that if the abuse is proved, the contract is broken; and we re-enter into all our rights; that is, into the exercise of all our duties.*—Our own authority indeed is as much a

the sentiment corresponds precisely with what that gentleman advanced in the House of Commons at a period many years antecedent to the publication he censures; and which might have been called at that time, “The Rights of Man, by Edmund Burke.”—“*What is government more than the management of the affairs of a nation? It is not, and from its nature cannot be the property of any particular man or family, but of the whole community, at whose expence it is supported.*”—Extract from Paine’s Rights of Man, in the Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, quarto edition, page 463.

trust

last century, did not justify the licentiousness of Mr. Paine, he certainly provoked the

trust originally, as the Company's authority is a trust derivatively; and it is the use we make of the resumed power that must justify or condemn us in the resumption of it."—Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill, Dec. 1, 1783, quarto edition, page 334.

"Much had been said of the sense of the people, as the grounds on which ministers might rest their defence of the late dissolution; and on this head I am ready to confess, that *the sense of the people, however erroneous at times, must always govern the legislature of this country.*"—Parliamentary Debates, June 14, 1784.

"Allusions have upon this occasion been made to the Revolution and the Restoration; but they were acts of necessity, having attendant upon them, their peculiar ways; but what was the nature of the Revolution, and what was the nature of the restraints upon the executive power, agreed upon and consented to, at that memorable period? They were these:—*If a king shall abolish or alter courts of law, trial by jury, or religion, or erect a standing army; then the compact is DISSOLVED, and all right and power reverts to the people*—and the people by PLOTS, CONSPIRACIES,

the strictures and animadversions of that wretched incendiary, and let loose a legion of
of

RACIES, or any other SECRET or VIOLENT *means* may HURL such a king from the throne.—The Revolution was in fact a precedent of a DELINQUENT monarch, a precedent to teach this lesson to kings :

“Disce Justitiam moniti, et non temnere Leges.”

Debates on the Regency, Monday, Dec. 22, 1788:

It may perhaps be thought that I have treated Mr. Burke with uncommon asperity ; but I have only dealt the same measure to him that he has dealt to others ; and while retaliation partakes of the nature of equity, my strictures cannot be condemned, nor can he in decency complain of feeling in his turn a portion of that severity which he has exercised at various times with such extreme rancour against several of the ablest and most virtuous characters in the kingdom. I will not appeal to the suspicious and equivocal testimony of those with whom he has acted, nor of those whom he has opposed, but to the incontrovertible evidence of experience. It is to the unerring judgment of mankind that I appeal, whether the whole of his public conduct has not been contradictory and inconsistent; waspish, impe-

i rious

of firebrands in the country, who degrading our moral worth as well as our
 mental

rious and vindictive ? whether he is not to be traced through all the serpentine windings of his political existence, by the poison he has trailed and the mischiefs he has occasioned ? And is it for this man, hated, despised, and deserted as he is by all parties, to elevate his voice, at once the Stentor and the Mentor of the age ? Is it this man, this *Pope* in politics, who is at variance with himself and with all the world, that pretends to infallibility ? who, fixing bells to his own neck, flies off in a direct tangent, expecting us to follow him over hedges and ditches, the bell-wether of the flock ; leaping without why or wherefore the fences of wisdom, prudence, right, justice, and humanity ? For Heaven's sake, what are the pretensions of this extraordinary personage, that he should arrogate so much to himself and allow so little to others ? What is there in his conduct to admire or to imitate ? and with what credit to morals, or with what safety to the public interest, can his eloquence, however splendid, vehement and forcible, be urged in extenuation of what even Mildness in her best humour would refuse to class under the head either of absurdity or inconsistency ? Is an imagination, inflamed

mental faculties, would have issued from
 their High Court of Chancery statutes
 of

to madness by flattery, and in which metaphors are crowded with as gaudy a profusion as we see mirrors displayed in the shop of a carver and gilder, to dazzle, corrupt and blind our better understanding?—No man is more disposed than myself to pay the just tribute of applause to distinguished talents and virtues; but I cannot contemplate the abilities of Mr. Burke, without drawing a comparison very much to his disadvantage, between their *excellence* and their *application*. Such has been the result of my observations on a man whose conduct in public life I have followed very closely; and as one of the jury impanelled to decide on the public proceedings of men in public situations, I am under no apprehension that my veracity or judgment will be impeached by the verdict I have given.

I owe this explanation not to the sorry object in question, but to the Minister, who may perhaps think it extraordinary that I should grapple a man with such fierceness, who has of late supported the measures of the Crown with an ardour and enthusiasm equal to my own. No man can possibly have a more exalted opinion of the talents and rectitude of Mr. Pitt, than I have.

What

of lunacy and bankruptcy against every description of societies and government, but those of their own construction.

In

What his father said of the late Lord Clive as a General, may with still greater justice be applied to the first of these as a Minister; but my veneration cannot exempt me from other duties which I feel myself bound to fulfil, nor need he be ashamed of the panegyric of a man who is superior to the infamy of writing for hire, and who disdains to flatter or deceive. My object in enabling the world to form a just estimate of Mr. Burke's character, is to disqualify him for future hostility. My intention is to furnish an antidote to the venom he distils with a profusion sufficient to infect the general mass of humanity, and to render this mischief to the country as harmless to the Government which he injures and insults by his support, as he is contemptible. Nor can I fail. I must eventually triumph, for the progress of truth, though slow, is certain; its influence, however counteracted by art or opposed by violence, is irresistible and permanent, while that of delusion is, as it ought to be, short, precarious, and transitory. Hence the hope and consolation, which afflicted persecuted excellence derives under the pressure of unmerited and

In allowing us so small a portion of intellect, and a still less portion of knowledge, Mr. Paine would reduce us to a state of childhood, imbecillity, and insolvency; he seems to have considered all mankind as in their infancy, and supposing himself alone arrived at maturity, would have claimed and exercised as a right, the guardianship of the whole human race. How far he may be qualified for so important a task, may be collected from the history of his life; and though we may smile at the folly of prescribing to the world the conduct it should observe, we cannot but reprobate the insolence that would usurp a dominion over

aggravated oppression. Hence the great security which mankind enjoy and possess against every description of fraud, as well as against the craft and ambition of grave and solemn impostors, however dignified, rewarded, or protected they may be by the mistaken policy of the Court.

our

our minds, and reduce us to a state of mental servitude, more deplorable in prospect, and more humiliating and horrible in its effects, than the despotism he declaimed against.

There is always an obligation due to bad men, whenever they reveal their intentions. Presuming upon the lenity of our laws, more than upon the equity of his designs, Mr. Paine came forward with a boldness that eclipses even the licence of modern times, and proposed to an entire nation enjoying perfect tranquillity from without, and perfect security within—to a nation in a state of prosperity unexampled in the history of mankind, and happy in its Government, a total subversion of its Laws and Constitution !

Such a proposition at any other season would be treated with ridicule, and the man who made it supposed to have escaped

caped from Bedlam; but at this moment,
 and in the ferment that agitates men's
 minds on the Continent, it is turpitude,
 not insanity, inasmuch as it aims to ac-
 complish the mischiefs it recommends,
 and would involve an entire country and
 people in ruin. His efforts were not di-
 rected against any particular Government,
 but against all Governments; they were
 not new regulations that he would esta-
 blish, but old ones that he would abolish.
 Order was to have been subverted, not
 preserved, and war declared, not against
 Priests or Sovereigns, not against Super-
 stition or Despotism, not against Mo-
 narchy, Aristocracy, or Republicanism,
 but against Civil Society in general, and
 under whatever form it may exist.

The whole human race was included
 in this terrible proscription; and from
 this wild and ruthless chaos of accumu-
 lated

lated crimes and follies, you pretend, my Lord, that Wisdom and Justice would arise, and bastardize their parents !

It is vexatious in the extreme to see talents that might prove useful to mankind so shamefully perverted. The strong and comprehensive powers you possess entitle your Lordship to a distinguished rank in society : but while we reverence your abilities, we lament, as a misfortune to yourself and others, that your discretion and rectitude (we mean rectitude in argument, for it does not become us to notice any other) should bear no proportion to the genius and activity of your mind. The publications to which I allude, as far as they relate to the Laws and Government of this country, are not only a direct attack upon the Constitution, but upon the conduct and principles of the Nation at large ! They are as much a libel on the good sense and integrity of the
 People,

People, as on the King, Lords, and Commons.

They not only assert that the Representation is defective, the Peerage useless, and the Monarchy burthenfome and disgraceful, but that we are accomplices in the guilt that plunders and insults us. It is not usual, my Lord, to traduce those whom we would persuade or win to our purpose; nor is it the surest method to make men think highly of the force and extent of their faculties, by depreciating their understanding.

To convert us by abusing us, is, as far as my reading and experience enable me to judge, unprecedented in controversy, and more likely to confirm than to remove error; but whatever may be the motive, the manner is offensive, and the attempt dangerous.

The peace and prosperity, my Lord, of ten millions of your fellow creatures (I had almost

almost called them by the more endearing name of countrymen) are not even regarded as secondary considerations by Mr. Paine *
and

* There is not a more pleasing subject for contemplation to virtuous and benevolent minds than the progress of reason from infancy to maturity. It is the genuine and animating route of knowledge, which it is impossible to behold or follow at any period of our lives without advantage to ourselves and others. It is the conversion of ignorance, by gradual and effectual means, to wisdom, and it is probable that a very trifling attention to the process might have improved the morals and corrected the understanding of Mr. Paine. But the mild and useful arts of peace appear to have no hold on his affections; they have nothing in them correspondent with the strange and discordant nature of his ambition; and no sooner was tranquillity established in the western hemisphere, than he flew to Europe with the rapidity of thought in pursuit of fresh adventures. He discarded his adopted child America, with as little regret as he abandoned England, his venerable parent country, and renouncing with an unnatural apathy every obligation of filial duty—every sense of paternal goodness—renouncing even all social intercourse with

and his associates ; they were not taken into the scheme of his benevolence, not even

the world, and every tie that links man to man in the great confederacy of Nations, we find him by choice, not necessity, a poor and sorry outcast—a vagrant on the surface of the globe, without a country or an home to fly to, immured within the gloomy walls of a prison, and menaced with a death as ignominious as his life, by the very wretches, whose patronage he courted, and whose crimes he idolized. To an active and well disposed mind, America presented a wide and delightful field for speculation and honest industry. His genius, however extensive it may be, would have found ample occupation on that vast continent, and posterity might have been indebted to his zeal and his talents for comforts and improvements unknown to the present time. If the real interests of mankind had been the pursuit of this miserable, degraded and worthless object ; if it had seriously been his wish to diffuse the light of reason over every part of the earth ; how comes it that the unenlightened and uncivilized tribes in the internal parts of America were not comprehended in that scheme of universal fraternity and felicity which he professes so vehemently in conversation and in print, but violates in
practice ?

even as a contingency. On the contrary,
we were required to engage in riot and
revolt,

practice ? How comes it that those equal rights which he took so much pains to communicate to the intelligent and cultivated European, were not revealed to the untutored Indian, and a benevolent effort made on his part to reclaim whole nations from the ignorance and ferocious barbarism in which they have been enveloped from the birth of time ? If it is his ambition to collect and harmonize the dispersed and vagrant inhabitants of the earth into social intercourse with each other, the back settlements of that vast country, which his vanity pretends to have liberated and illumined, would have afforded abundant employment for his zeal, as well as ample exercise for his genius and industry. The immense and almost impenetrable forests in the western world might, by his exertions, have given place in a few years to populous towns and cities ;—the pathless wild through which the wretched Indian explores his solitary way might have been converted into fruitful and well-cultivated plains, and the rude and hapless natives changed from savages into citizens and men !—A well-ordered Government might have arisen in the desert ; and ruthless, predatory war have given way to peace,

revolt, not for our own particular advantage, but for that of others—for that of
our

security, and comfort. But the wretched state of constant and ferocious hostility approaches nearer to his ideas of natural right, and better suits the coarse and barbarous texture of his mind. The scalping-knife levelled at a chief gives him the idea of an axe raised against his Sovereign. It falls in unison with his principles and his feelings, and leaves him nothing to covet or enjoy. Disdaining all decency and reserve, he avows in the face of the world, that it is the subversion, not the formation of States at which he aims. The din of civil discord alone vibrates sweet music to his ear, and domestic, not foreign war is his object. The conflict of contending Nations has nothing in it sufficiently mischievous or sanguinary to engage his notice. The repelling of unprovoked hostility or of wanton invasion can neither awaken his attention nor deserve his applause; but when Rebellion rears its terrific head above the level and controul of law; when the bloody arm of the subject is raised against his legitimate Prince, and that of the child against the author of his existence, Mr. Paine feels interested in the event; and, anticipating the fall of Kings, Magistrates, and Laws! the extinction of
virtue,

our inveterate enemies, my Lord ; and if
 any good, contrary to all probability, had
 resulted

virtue, justice, and humanity, he riots in the ruin he beholds, and declares the millennium at hand. It is not the patriotic resistance of independent States to foreign oppression that charms and soothes his soul, but private feuds grown into insurrection and anarchy. Where decrepid age, scarce able to sustain its tottering weight under the combined pressure of age and infirmities, receives from some obscure assassin its final dismissal from the world ! where the citizen is armed against citizen—brother against brother—and the son against his venerable and affrighted parent ! where all right is confounded, and all ages, sexes, and conditions, involved in one general and comprehensive ruin ! Such are the scenes that rouse him into action ! such the pursuits that afford guilty occupation and amusement to his restless mind.

Happily his career of infamy has been interrupted by his accomplices in crime. Despised, suspected and imprisoned by his sanguinary associates, he has no longer the power of doing mischief ; and glad to compound on any terms for a life scarce worth preserving, he is likely to terminate his wretched existence in a jail ! Let
 those

resulted from our guilt and folly, we were not certain of being permitted to enjoy it; for the object of the anarchy and confusion into which we were to be precipitated was to give peace and security to France, not happiness and prosperity to England. No benefit was promised as a boon beforehand, or as a recompense afterwards. No flattering hope was held out to us even in perspective, or any equivalent offered for relinquishing present ease and comfort, and sacrificing at a venture, and for no one possible good to ourselves, all that renders life desirable or supportable. Surely, my Lord, you must have departed from your accustomed prudence, as well as from every idea of duty and respect to

those who approving of his conduct would adopt his principles be admonished by his fate. Let his history and catastrophe be impressed on their minds, and engraven on their hearts; for there is wisdom in the lesson, which it may be imprudent if not hazardous to spurn.

mankind, when you urged us to guarantee rapine, proscription, and massacre in France.

After having felled to the ground with more than Gothic barbarity all that was good or dignified; after having mowed down with remorseless rage all that was venerable and exalted in their wretched and distracted country; after having rioted in slaughter, till even carnage, gorged without being satiated, sickens at the horrid banquet, the savage villains, still covetous of blood, are hewing each other down with as much fury and expedition as they butchered their superiors. And yet, my Lord, terrible as this wild and ferocious conflict is even to the imagination; sanguinary and unexampled as it is in the annals of our nature, and in which nothing appears but a diabolical emulation for a pre-eminence in guilt; your Lordship

ship avowedly stands forth an admirer of crimes which desolate the earth and dishonour humanity ! Are we, then, to become a rampart to iniquity ; the bondsmen of assassins and of public robbers ? of men immersed in every species of guilt that degrades manhood, and renders this world a wilderness of crimes ?

Must we, in conjunction with other nations, my Lord, form a ring-fence as it were round France, while, lost to all sense of honour and of virtue, she revels in every species of enormity with impunity, and sets religion and morals at defiance ? It is scarce within the scope and reach of thought that such an expectation could exist in any well-organized brain, much less that it should be expressed and publicly avowed. Yet such is the expectation that your Lordship has ventured to form ; it stands recorded in your parliamentary harangues,

rangues, unencumbered by conditions and unaccompanied by any assurance of national benefit to us in return.

As far as such an avowal puts us on our guard, and enables us to counteract intended mischief, we are obliged to your Lordship; but are you aware, my Lord, that you are giving us in your legislative capacity a comment on Mr. Paine, in whose text an antipathy to Kings and Peers is not only expressed, but a positive declaration avowed, in direct terms, that “*France must be surrounded with revolutions before she will be in peace and safety?*”

And is it for this solitary purpose that we are called upon with an effrontery unexampled in the history of libellous and seditious publications, to renounce not only the Constitution and Government under which we happily live, but to relinquish our prejudices, our attachments, and affections, to throw them from us as

Q

aliens,

aliens, and as enemies unworthy of notice or regard; to renounce all that education, duty, and habit have imprinted on our hearts and minds; and to give up without a pang or a sigh all those tender and endearing ties that bind us to each other, and constitute the very charm of existence? Even the obligations of religion, sacred and immutable as they are, are expected to fall in this intended general wreck, and what connects us as it were with heaven and eternity, relinquished and denied! Are you aware, my Lord, that at this moment a “*peace of France*” (for which you seem so indecently anxious) can be obtained on no other terms than by a war with reason and humanity? And must her felicity be purchased by so much sorrow and aggravated calamity? Must the extinction of the various nations in Europe be the price of her existence and security? And can her repose be found

found only in the despondency and ruin of the human race? Fie upon it, my Lord!

The imagination startles at the idea; and it may well be asked in what infernal seminary of foul and preposterous guilt you have been schooled into such maxims of right and humanity? Let us suppose, my Lord, that the Government you have declaimed against, not that which you admire, was subverted. Imagine to yourself the wreck and dissolution of the various parts which consolidate its power, while they support and dignify each other. Imagine to yourself (for the picture is not overcharged) a sanguinary rabble let loose from all restraint; our wealthy and numerous manufacturers dispersed; their looms, forges, and mills destroyed; their habitations pillaged and their persons proscribed! Behold their hapless wives and unoffending offspring forlorn and penniless, turned out on the wild

and ruthless common, menaced with famine, and compelled to solicit death as an act of mercy from the hands of assassins stained with the blood of their husbands and their fathers! Imagine the accomplishment of all these aggravated horrors, my Lord, and you will have a faint idea of what would result from the adoption of your councils, and the introduction of those maxims and principles which you admire in a nation that has every claim to your resentment, for having poisoned your mind with sentiments which I trust are as foreign to your nature as they are unworthy of your rank and education. Amidst such complicated horrors, amidst such scenes of rueful waste and desolation, without power, without fortune, credit, or influence, exposed to insult, and a mendicant for your life as well as for your subsistence to the very men who are become masters of both—what would
be

be your reflections ? what would be your situation ? to whom would you fly for protection ? where would you seek refuge, not from the ruin that stares you in the face, and cannot be avoided, but from the bitter and agonising reproaches of your own conscience ? Under such distressing circumstances, you might perhaps for a short time evade the fatal stroke that would terminate at once your sufferings and existence ; but though you could fly from the poignard, though a refinement in cruelty might afford you a respite for a few days or weeks, I will defy you to fly from *yourself*. Your reflections, sharpened by remorse as well as by a sense of your own lamentable and deplorable condition, would harass and pursue you ; and, anticipating the just vengeance of Heaven, give your Lordship a tolerable idea of that hell which religion has assigned to the guilty.

My

My Lord, I would entreat you to excuse the freedom with which I have addressed you, but the importance of my subject is an apology for my warmth: and I am unwilling to believe that you can be offended with a man, whose motives, however ungracious his manner may be, are laudable, and who certainly has no other object in view, than to destroy, if possible, the delusion under which you have acted, and to revive in your breast that ardent zeal for the interest of your country, which marked the infancy of your parliamentary career. I know that you have been deceived—I know that you entertained an opinion that Mr. Maret was authorised to treat with Mr. Pitt in November 1792; and that the War might have been avoided if the Minister had entered into a negotiation with that gentleman. This opinion became general, and hence the torrent of abuse which flowed in every direction against Government,

ment, and bore down for a time the good sense and justice of the country. It is to the influence of this impression that I attribute the part which your Lordship has taken of late in public affairs, and the acrimony with which you accuse Administration with being the authors of a war, which Mr. Maret, the night I had the honour to see your Lordship at his apartments in Portman Square, might have assured you it was not in their power to have avoided. But that gentleman was less explicit with your Lordship than he was with me; nor did the Executive Council at Paris repose much more confidence in their Agent, than he appears to have done in your Lordship. At the period above mentioned he had no authority to solicit an interview with Mr. Pitt, or to treat on the affairs of the two nations. His mission to England was of a private nature, and entirely confined to some domestic arrangements in the family of the late

Duke of Orleans. That he should, thus circumstanced, have had a conference with Mr. Pitt, may well appear extraordinary to your Lordship; and having obtained an interview with the Minister, it was fair to conclude that he had come over expressly for the purpose. I will explain the enigma by informing your Lordship, that this conference was the result of that spirit of intrigue which reigns with more or less vehemence in all his countrymen. London at that time was crowded with a number of political adventurers, who were at once friends, enemies, spies, rivals, and informers against each other: all of them pretended to be Agents from the Executive Council; and one of these embryo Ambassadors, aspiring to the honour of superseding Mr. Chauvelin, announced himself as the person authorised to treat privately with the British Minister. He repeatedly declared that he had something of consequence to communicate from

Mr.

Mr. Le Brun; and pressing with unremitting zeal and assiduity for an interview, a confidential friend of Mr. Pitt was deputed to receive the propositions of this pretended agent: but when the parties met, it was not *this* man but *another* that was deputed to treat. That other, my Lord, was Mr. Maret; and when he was produced from behind the curtain, it appeared that he had as little to say as his friend, and that neither was instructed to open any negotiation, or to offer any propositions whatever to Government. Your Lordship will easily believe that an interview obtained by trick, and that could lead to nothing, was not very long; neither could the conversation that passed be very interesting. Mr. Maret having nothing to say, contented himself with expressing the happiness he should feel in being instrumental in preserving a good understanding between the two nations, and after a few general expressions of a similar nature

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he retired. This was his frank acknowledgment to me at the time, and he has even declared it to me in his correspondence, in consequence of some letters that passed between us in the interval, on the subject of the deceit that had been practised by his precursor, and on the impudence of Le Brun, who, on receiving information of this interview, went down to the National Convention and assured them that “*the English Minister had PROVOKED a conference with one of their secret agents, but that he had been peremptorily forbidden to open himself any farther to Mr. Pitt, or to have any further intercourse whatever with him, either directly or indirectly, on public affairs.*” I read the dispatch with equal indignation and surprise, for it contained expressions as indecent as they were unjust and arrogant: and on my pointing out to Mr. Maret the inferences that might be drawn from the falsehood of asserting that the conference to which he had

been

been admitted, was at the *instance* of Mr. Pitt; he observed they were mere words of course, the ill interpretation of which it should be his care to correct on his return to France. It is of little consequence to enquire whether this assertion, so void of truth, originated with him, or with Le Brun; all I mean to infer from stating the fact, is, that little dependance can be placed on the evidence of men capable of such misrepresentation. It is now incumbent on me to convince your Lordship that the former person had no public mission to this country at the time that he obtained an interview with Mr. Pitt; and as a proof that I do not advance what I cannot establish, I refer your Lordship to an extract from a letter which I received from Mr. Maret, dated Paris, January 11, 1793, and which I am at liberty to publish, *without being guilty of a breach of confidence*. It was in consequence of my expressing myself with some acrimony, at

the conduct of Le Brun, and the fraudulent artifice by which the interview with Mr. Pitt was obtained.—It is as follows :

“ Dites moi donc nettement, mon cher
 “ Miles, quels sont vos sujets de plaintes?
 “ S’agirait-il de quelques inexactitudes qui se
 “ sont glissés dans le rapport que Le Brun a
 “ fait avant que je fusse de retour à Paris?
 “ Je conviens avec vous que son énonciation
 “ sur les conférences de nos agens secrets
 “ n’est pas exacte—Je n’étais point AGENT
 “ SECRET—je n’avais ni AUTORI-
 “ SATION—NI MISSION, & j’ai dit la
 “ vérité en le déclarant à vous, et à Mr. Pitt
 “ —Le Ministre s’est trompé, & je n’ai
 “ trompé ni vous ni Mr. Pitt—Dieu vous
 “ garde de la soupçonner, si mon amitié vous
 “ est chère! car je sens qu’elle ne survivrait pas
 “ à un soupçon injurieux dont ma délicatesse
 “ et ma bonnefoi seraient frappés—Au
 “ reste, mon cher Miles, ne nous occupons
 “ pas

“ pas de ces tristes idées, et ne songeons qu’à
 “ l’intérêt que nous mettons réciproquement
 “ à être toujours amis.—

(Signé) “ HUGUES BERNARD MARET.”*

* “ PARIS, 11th January, 1793.

“ Tell me then freely, my dear Miles, what are the
 “ grounds of your complaint against me? Is it on ac-
 “ count of the inaccuracies which appeared in the report
 “ that Le Brun made before my return?—I agree with
 “ you that his statement of the conferences with our
 “ secret agents is not exact.—I was not a secret agent
 “ —I had no authority to treat, nor had I any mission;
 “ and in declaring this to Mr. Pitt and to yourself, I ac-
 “ knowledged nothing but the truth.—

“ The Minister (Le Brun) deceived himself, but I
 “ neither deceived you nor Mr. Pitt. If my friendship
 “ is dear to you, God preserve you from harbouring
 “ such an opinion! for I feel very sensibly, that it will
 “ not survive a suspicion so injurious, which would
 “ equally wound my delicacy and my sincerity—Banish
 “ then, my dear Miles, those painful ideas, and think
 “ only of that zeal, and that interest which we mutually
 “ feel to continue in friendship with each other.

(Signed) “ HUGUES BERNARD MARET.”

Your

Your Lordship will perceive from the above extract that Mr. Maret had no public mission to this country in 1792; and you might have learnt from himself, my Lord, the motives that decided him not to request an audience when he came over in the character of Chargé des Affaires, with "*full powers to treat*," as the public prints in the French interest had the audacity to assert on his arrival in 1793.—At all events your Lordship cannot be ignorant that he was eight days in this country, without offering, or even intending to deliver his credentials, until he received fresh instructions from Paris*. And if it had not been the object of France to deceive, delude, and finally attack this country, a conduct more conformable to justice, and to that decency and respect which are due from one nation to another, would certainly have been

* Vide The Conduct of France towards Great Britain, page 111, printed for G. Nicol, Pall Mall.

adopted,

adopted, and adhered to. It really, my Lord, was not my intention to have said so much, but I have been forced by the circumstances of the times to come more forward than I wished: not altogether from motives of personal regard for the Minister, whose talents I revere, and whose wonderful powers of mind have twice saved the empire*; but from that unbounded affection for my country, its laws, government, and religion, which supercedes all other considerations, and justifies the zeal I have shewn. Ministers, however amiable and conciliating their manners may be in the less turbulent and more pleasing walks of private life—with whatever dignity their public conduct may be marked, and whatever advantages may result from the combined powers of their wisdom, integrity, and exertions—are, with all their virtues and qualifications,

* In rescuing the country from the dominion of Faction, in 1784 and 1789.

but

but the atoms of an hour, hurried down the stream of oblivion with other atoms, and doomed, like your Lordship and myself, to perish ! But the British empire, and the British constitution—the pride, boast, and security of Englishmen—the work of ages, and the admiration of the world—are, I trust, ETERNAL !

POSTSCRIPT.

POSTSCRIPT.

IT was reasonable to expect that the multiplied excesses of the French would have convinced your Lordship of the danger of loosening those ligatures, by which men are held in peaceful and virtuous subjection to the dictates of reason, justice, and humanity. But example has lost its influence, and all the wholesome lessons of experience only serve to animate you, it seems, to a more decided and more violent opposition to their salutary suggestions:—every year, every day and hour—nay, my Lord, every minute teems with new and extraordinary events—every moment is pregnant with rude misshapen thoughts; the vile offspring of vice, folly, and irregular ambition, which, ripening into action, bid defiance to the sober

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maxims of past and happier times, and assume a confidence that belongs exclusively to virtue. The savage cruelties of the untutored Indian are eclipsed by the still more savage ferocity of the civilized European. The tomahawk and scalping-knife no longer excite horror, indignation, or surprise; while the wilds of America appear less terrible, and more secure, than the best cultivated and hitherto most polished part of Europe. Not content with solitary individual sacrifice, the French mow down each other by scores and hundreds; and that some idea may be formed of their extreme profligacy, the accused, when arraigned at the tribunal of perverted justice, impudently assert their claim to acquittal, not on their innocence, but on the multitude and enormity of their crimes *!—not on their pretensions to character, or to the general good tenour of their behaviour, but on the

* Vide the defence of La Croix, and the remainder of that batch of assassins that were dispatched.

uniform villany of their lives, passed in the execrable pursuit of every thing that is infamous; and that the climax of iniquity should be perfect, we behold vice unabashed taking rank of virtue; and on conviction, the abandoned remorseless herd founding their claim to pardon on the number of their crimes, and pleading their very guilt in the face of Heaven and the World, in bar of punishment, and as a reason why the blow of vindictive justice should be arrested—not enforced. And yet amidst these dreadful scenes of riot, waste, and devastation!—of rapine, crime, and slaughter—amidst this universal carnage of the human race, we find tragedy converted into comedy, and murder made a pastime!—Paris abounds with balls, operas, and buffoons—For my part, I wonder that its wretched inhabitants can find time or appetite for dinner, much less a disposition to mirth and festivity; but their levity keeps pace with their barbarity, and they

have eighteen places of public diversion constantly open besides the Guillotine, which may be called the National Theatre (le Théâtre de la Nation) without a mockery of their woes or misfortunes.—Who can behold without affliction, the laws, manners, and dominion of a great Nation, a vast and splendid ruin!—Who can behold without horror, my Lord, the total destruction of the long established habits, opinions, and urbanity of an entire people, once the object of our imitation, and at all times of our respect! And what image can the execrable horrors they inflict on each other, present to the astonished and affrighted mind, but that of a wilderness of tigers, stimulated to fierce conflict by what alone inflames the brute creation to madness, and tearing each other to pieces with all the ferocity of their savage nature? And is it to this deplorable and degraded state that your Lordship would reduce your happy and much envied country?

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Is it to enjoy a miserable and dishonourable triumph over its subverted laws and constitution, that you pay court to the reptiles, who, driven from house to house, and expelled all decent reputable cover, assembled in the fields last week to flatter you into a participation of their crimes, and seduce you from that duty which you owe still more to yourself, if possible, than to your country? Is it from the greasy exhalations of such beings, that your Lordship seeks for the unction that is to beatify and canonize you in the opinion of posterity? And is your ambition of so spongy a nature as to imbibe, and hope to retain the noxious and fugitive plaudits of a senseless promiscuous rabble, on the stability of whose support and affections you can calculate with mathematical exactness, from the example of those who played the same game in France that your Lordship seems inclined to play in England; and which it is our duty to prevent (should
the

the laws prove inadequate) by shaming you out of bad conduct and company, and forcing your intoxicated and bewildered mind to reflect on the direful consequences that must inevitably result to yourself, family, and name, by associating with men whose object is to throw the nation into confusion! My Lord, it behoves you to disavow their proceedings—It is incumbent on you to come forward with the dignity of an honest man, and reject the vote of thanks which they have had the insolence to propose, and which it would be infamy to accept—Your character is at stake—You must decide, not deliberate, or the world will think worse of your principles than it does of your understanding.

F I N I S.

ERRATUM.

Page 86, line 13, *for* army *read* persons.

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To be had of G. NICOL, PALL-MALL, and J. SEWELL,
CORNHILL,

By the same Author,

THE
CONDUCT OF FRANCE TOWARDS
GREAT-BRITAIN;

WITH NOTES, AND AN APPENDIX.

